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ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY  
OF MEDIAEVAL ENGLAND

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CHAPTERS IN THE  
ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY  
OF MEDIAEVAL ENGLAND

THE WARDROBE, THE CHAMBER  
AND THE SMALL SEALS

BY

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*Late Honorary Professor of the University*

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## PREFACE

IN his preface to Volume III. of this book, my husband outlined his scheme for Volume V. He planned that it should include "the later history of the small seals and of the organisation necessary for their employment," and "an account of some non-royal households for the study of which sufficient material remains, notably those of queen Philippa, the Black Prince and the dukes of Lancaster"; also various appendices, corrigenda and addenda, and the index to the whole work.

By May 1929 he had substantially completed the part of this volume which he had planned to write himself, namely, the chapters on the later history of the small seals. The final revision, more especially of the diplomatic portions of these, alone remained to be done. Upon the latter, he consulted, as he had always intended to do, Mr V. H. Galbraith, Reader in Diplomatic in the University of Oxford, who suggested the lines on which the subject could be brought up to date. In consultation with him, Dr. Dorothy M. Broome carried out this considerable work of revision, which often involved reference to the sources. She rewrote much of the third section of Chapter XVI. and modified the diplomatic passages of Chapter XVII. She also took the chief responsibility for the selection of the seals for illustration and the arrangement of the plates, and made all the drawings in the text. My husband was able during the summer to read and approve the final version, and had the satisfaction of seeing the bulk of the book, namely, his own chapters XVI. and XVII., sent to press in September 1929. He died on October 23.

Some years ago my husband had decided that the sections on the subsidiary households should be written by others. He entrusted the account of the household of the Black Prince to our daughter, Dr. Margaret Sharp. She had already worked on the subject, and my husband was anxious to incorporate the results of her researches in full. He hoped that Miss Broome would write the section on the queens' households, and she collected material with this end in view. However, she was so fully occupied with the revision of the diplomatic passages that in August 1929, with her cordial assent, he asked my sister, Professor Hilda Johnstone, if she would undertake this section; she at once agreed to do so, and Miss Broome kindly placed at her disposal such material as had already been collected. There remained a study of the households of the dukes of Lancaster, but in the circumstances he thought it best to omit any detailed treatment of this subject, as its preparation would occasion delay.

The present volume completes the text of the book, but my husband found that its length made impossible the inclusion of the large index, and therefore arranged that it should appear in a sixth and final volume, which, it is hoped, will follow shortly. This will include, in addition to the index, tables of wardrobe receipts and expenditure, lists of the chief officers of the Crown to 1399, a supplementary bibliographical list of abbreviations, and a list of addenda and corrigenda to the whole work.

The volume here presented is therefore mainly according to plan. It is, as my husband wished it to be, a joint effort rendered possible by the co-operation of "a syndicate of old pupils." He was proud and touched to find the readiness of their co-operation. Miss Broome's work has been of vital service. She was occupied for six years in helping my husband, for five months after his death she continued to give her whole time to the book and since then no inconsiderable part of it, and he would have wished again, as in the preface to Vol. III., to express his appreciation of her work and to record his indebtedness to her. The volume has gained much from her aptitude and skill in research and her

familiarity with exchequer records. Her work on the technical detail of diplomatic, her unselfish and ready acceptance of the labour of revision in the place of further independent investigation of the queens' households, her willing assumption of additional responsibility in seeing Chapters XVI. and XVII. through the press since my husband's death, have been invaluable. To his friend and pupil Mr. Galbraith he was deeply grateful for so cheerfully giving his time in the midst of his other work. My husband particularly appreciated the help Miss Johnstone gave him, by undertaking at short notice the section on the queens' households, for which she collected a great quantity of new material. It was a joy to him that her labours and those of our daughter should be linked with his own.

To Dr. Tait, the Chairman of the Manchester University Press, I owe warm personal thanks for generously offering, immediately after the death of his intimate friend, to read all proofs of his book. He could have done him no more valuable service. As editor, his labours have been great, lavished without stint or measure. The University Press has stood the close friend of the work throughout. To its secretary, Mr. H. M. McKechnie, my husband could always turn for indefatigable assistance, and I am peculiarly indebted to him for his advice and assistance since my husband's death.

The aid of his friends, both past and present members of the staff of the Public Record Office, and the help of many others, rendered both personally and in their published work, gave my husband pleasure and comradeship. In this volume, as in his earlier ones, he has made it his practice to acknowledge in the foot-notes their individual help. To each of them I want to convey the special gratitude he would have delighted to record, none the less warmly though they are not mentioned by name here.

MARY TOUT

HAMPSTEAD, *September* 1930.





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## CHAPTER XVI

### THE LATER HISTORY OF THE PRIVY SEAL

#### SECTION I

##### THE PRIVY SEAL AND ITS KEEPERS UNDER EDWARD III. AND RICHARD II.

IN discussing the interaction of administrative and political history under Edward III. and Richard II., there has been occasion to say a good deal about the privy seal and its keepers, and to suggest the gradual evolution of the seal from a private instrument of the household to a public instrument of state. We must now attempt to elaborate the history of this development. Some repetition of what has been said before will be unavoidable, but we cannot properly work out the history of the privy seal if we merely treat it as a part of the general machinery of government. We must also consider it in isolation, and trace the process by which it became the centre of a new office of state, a new ministry rather than a mere branch of the household.

Already under Edward II. there was a tendency towards the officialisation of the privy seal, for the ordainers tried to take the seal out of court as well as to limit its operations. Their policy so far prevailed that, in 1312, Edward II. was compelled to separate the keepership of the privy seal from the controllership of the wardrobe, and to recognise in Roger Northburgh the first independent keeper of the privy seal. This baronial nominee, responsible to his creators, had under him a staff of four clerks, writing for the seal, and remained with his clerks for long periods *extra curiam*, notably when attending meetings of council. Even in court he was a check, if not a spy, on the king's actions. Accord-



ingly the seal ceased to fulfil its original purpose of expressing primarily the king's personal wishes. In revenge the king set up another instrument by which he could give effect to his will. The result of this we shall see when we study the history of the secret seal. Yet for twelve years the crown continued to oppose the claim of the baronage to control the privy seal, and repeatedly strove to evade carrying out the ordinance which had separated its custody from the controllership of the wardrobe. By 1316, Edward II. was strong enough to combine once more the two offices in the person of Thomas Charlton. Then came the baronial reaction in the York parliament of 1318, in which the principles of the ordinances were vindicated by the expulsion of Charlton from the controllership. He was permitted to retain the custody of the privy seal. That the separate custody of the seal in itself involved no radical consequences is clear, since the Household Ordinance of 1318 definitely laid down that the keeper of the seal, his office and his clerks were still to be a section of the household, and that their salaries, allowances and status were to be those of the other wardrobe clerks. Yet this connection with the court gradually tended to become more nominal than real, and in the heyday of his triumph Edward was still dissatisfied with the situation. In 1320 the controllership and the keepership were once more combined under Robert Baldock, and, when Baldock became chancellor in 1323, the union of the two offices was maintained by conferring both of them on Robert Wodehouse.<sup>1</sup> But Wodehouse gave up the privy seal after a few months, before he vacated the controllership of the wardrobe. With the former resignation the two offices were permanently separated. Thus an innovation forced upon a reluctant king by a rebellious baronage, after eleven years of struggle, was accepted by the monarch at the height of his power. He was now apparently satisfied that the secret seal would be a sufficient instrument of his personal wishes. It followed that the officialisation of the privy seal went on the faster, since that was now the accepted policy of all parties.

<sup>1</sup> See above, ii. 271. When I wrote that passage I was ignorant that Wodehouse was made keeper of the seal as well as controller. However, *M.R.K.R.* 105/153 makes it clear that he received the double appointment. He remained controller till Oct. 19, 1323, when he was appointed keeper of the wardrobe. He resigned the privy seal a little before this, because on Oct. 3 we find Mr. Robert Ayleston keeping it; *C.W.* 124/6699, printed by Conway Davies, p. 578.

Eventually an officialised seal tends to go out of court, and the stages of this process we shall see worked out in the two reigns which we now have to study. Yet official conservatism remained strong, and relics of the original status of the privy seal still survived after it had effectively become a seal of state, and its keeper a public minister of the crown.

Baldock's acquiescence in the separation of the two offices, which he had held simultaneously for three years, was, no doubt, the more complete because he seems to have had a plan of his own for the privy seal. His subjection of the privy seal to the chancery, so that as chancellor he could control both the greater and the lesser secretarial offices, has already been described.<sup>1</sup> It had, perhaps, an ultimate and permanent effect in helping to dissociate the privy seal from the wardrobe. More immediately it resulted in three chancery clerks in succession being appointed keepers of the privy seal. Had the policy been persevered in, it might have led to the setting up in England of a single great chancery, like the chancery of France, whose officers controlled all the sealing departments of the state. But the fall of Edward II. and the death of Baldock again opened the door to change. What would be the policy in relation to the privy seal of an administration inspired by the ideals of the lords ordainers and bitterly hating Baldock and all his works?

Unfortunately the history of the privy seal in the early years of Edward III.'s reign is so obscure that a categorical answer to that question can hardly be given. A privy seal was, however, so necessary a part of the administrative machinery that the young king was at once provided with one, regardless of the precedent of the only previous minority, when there had been no privy seal until after Henry III. had personally assumed the government. That precedent, indeed, had been ignored already during the interregnum, when Edward of Windsor, ruling as regent jointly with his mother, had used his own privy seal as his instrument of government.<sup>2</sup> The first keeper of the new privy seal was Richard Airmyn, a chancery clerk, who had begun his official career as a clerk in the office of Edward II.'s privy seal. His brother William had transferred him to the chancery, but he had shared in William's

<sup>1</sup> See above, ii. 304-10.

<sup>2</sup> See above, ii. 309-10, and n. 1; iii. 2, 6.

troubles under Edward II., and only came back from exile in the train of Isabella and Mortimer. His appointment was doubtless due to the influence of William,<sup>1</sup> and shows a curious acceptance, by the leaders of the revolution, of Baldock's policy of staffing the privy seal with chancery clerks. But, after about a year of office, Richard retired to the keepership of the *domus conversorum*,<sup>2</sup> leaving little evidence of his activity as keeper of the privy seal.

Airmyn's successor, Adam Limber,<sup>3</sup> broke the habit of promoting chancery clerks to control the domestic chancery of the crown. Limber belonged to the group of clerks from North Lindsey, which was so conspicuous in the royal service all through the fourteenth century. In Michaelmas term, 1309-10, he was the personal clerk of Ingelard Warley, keeper of Edward II.'s wardrobe.<sup>4</sup> He was a king's clerk in 1310,<sup>5</sup> and in 1311 was transferred from the wardrobe to the exchequer, acting until 1322 as king's remembrancer.<sup>6</sup> Then he was sent to Gascony as constable of Bordeaux,<sup>7</sup> where he remained until 1324,<sup>8</sup> practically seneschal by reason of the illness, or incompetence, of the nominal holders of that office.<sup>9</sup> After Edmund of Kent went to Gascony as king's lieutenant, Adam was sent back to England to collect forces for its defence, though he returned to Gascony in 1325, when Edward, the king's son, was its governor.<sup>10</sup> Again in England in 1326, his loyalty to Isabella and her son procured for him the keepership of the privy seal in succession to Airmyn. He is known to have been

<sup>1</sup> See above, ii. 218 ; iii. 3.

<sup>2</sup> The extreme dates which refer to Richard as keeper are March 1, 1327, and Feb. 18, 1328. I suspect he acted from the January parliament of 1327 to the eve of the Northampton parliament of April 1328.

<sup>3</sup> He is generally styled in records, "Adam of Lymbergh," but his name undoubtedly comes from Great Limber, near Caistor, on the northern slope of the Lindsey wolds.

<sup>4</sup> *I.R.* 149/1.

<sup>5</sup> *C. Pap. Reg. Let.* ii. 81.

<sup>6</sup> In *Cal. Inq.* vii. 383, an old comrade in 1333 describes Limber as clerk in the wardrobe of the king's household from 1312 to 1315. His memory as to dates must have failed him, but his evidence confirms the testimony of the issue rolls. He was appointed remembrancer on Oct. 8, 1311 ; *C.P.R.*, 1307-13, p. 392.

<sup>7</sup> *Pl. Edw. II.* p. 397.

<sup>8</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1330-33, p. 101.

<sup>9</sup> His successor as constable was appointed on April 1 ; *Pl. Edw. II.* p. 398. See above, iv. 74, for his longer stay abroad.

<sup>10</sup> Adam left Gascony on Oct. 18, 1324, to collect troops. He returned on May 10, 1325 ; *C.C.R.*, 1330-33, pp. 100, 226, which shows he was not paid his expenses in 1330-31. Compare, however, *ib.*, 1323-27, p. 603, which shows Adam in England in Aug. 1326.



in office from early in 1327 to September 1329,<sup>1</sup> but nothing very distinctive is recorded of his acts, and he was still regarded as a subordinate wardrobe official. While Limber was keeper, bishop Burghersh, the treasurer, was accused of having the privy seal completely under his control, so that the habit of obedience to the head of the exchequer survived in Adam after his own withdrawal from that office.<sup>2</sup> It is clear that during his custody the privy seal counted for little in the administration. At last he was removed to the gilded exile of the chancellorship of Ireland,<sup>3</sup> returning home in 1334 as a baron of the exchequer,<sup>4</sup> and ending his career in 1339 after he had completed twenty-eight years of service.

With Limber's successor, Richard Bury, a new epoch in the history of the privy seal began. There is no need to tell once more the story of Bury's remarkable career.<sup>5</sup> His early advance suggests analogies with that of Limber.<sup>6</sup> But as regards personal influence, Bury has a closer affinity to Robert Baldock. Both Baldock and Bury passed from the wardrobe to the privy seal, both made that office the half-way house to the chancery, and both enjoyed the implicit confidence of their sovereign. A proof of the increasing importance of the privy seal is that it was now thought promotion for the keeper of the wardrobe to be entrusted with the privy seal, for its earlier keepers had only held the same status as the controller of the wardrobe. In contrast to his short-lived predecessors, Bury held office for three years and a half, apparently from September 1329 to April 1333.<sup>7</sup> We have seen

<sup>1</sup> He was probably appointed in Jan. 1327, and acted up to Sept. 23, 1329, that is, while Robert Wodehouse and Richard Bury were keepers of the wardrobe. He was "nuper custos" in April 1331, when he received a partial and belated payment of his expenses "extra curiam"; *I.R.* 258/6. The wages and expenses of himself and his clerks were still not fully discharged in Jan. 1338, when he received a payment on account; *ib.* 297/24.

<sup>2</sup> *Rot. Parl.* ii. 45-46.

<sup>3</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1330-34, p. 82. This appointment was on Feb. 26, 1331. He was reappointed on July 16, 1334; *ib.* p. 568.

<sup>4</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1334-38, p. 46.

<sup>5</sup> See above, iii. 25-27, 43; iv. 74, 76.

<sup>6</sup> See above, iv. 74, n. 4.

<sup>7</sup> These dates are conjectural, but I suspect that Bury received the custody of the privy seal immediately after he gave up the keepership of the wardrobe on Sept. 23, 1329, and that he only resigned on going to Avignon about April 7, 1333; *E.A.* 386/11. We know that he was still keeper on Jan. 2, 1333; *ib.* 383/12.

how he associated himself with William Montague in building up a court party in the household, which gained over the goodwill of the pope, organised the *coup d'état* of Nottingham Castle, and made Edward III. king in fact as well as in name.<sup>1</sup> Yet the keeper of the privy seal still worked by subterranean rather than by open channels. He still regarded himself as an officer "about the court," in contrast to the chancellor and treasurer, who concerned themselves with "the public affairs of the kingdom."<sup>2</sup> Under the conditions of Edward III.'s minority, the king's confidant enjoyed little influence over the great officers of state. It is clear that bishop Burghersh, now chancellor, controlled the official acts of the privy seal under Bury with the same domineering violence that he had, when treasurer, shown in his dealings with Adam Limber.<sup>3</sup>

In such circumstances the keeper of the privy seal was almost forced into duplicity. While Bury was conspiring with Montague to release his master from bondage, the magnates were complaining that Mortimer was using "writs of the targe" to exact fines, ransoms and unpopular foreign service.<sup>4</sup> Accordingly, it was not until after the fall of Mortimer that Bury's position was secure enough to enable him to employ the privy seal to further the interests of the prerogative. He then came into the open as a trusted servant of the king, the "beloved clerk" whose attendance at court was indispensable. When between April 4 and 20, 1331, Edward III. paid his sudden and mysterious visit to France, Bury accompanied his master to his secret interview with Philip VI. at Pont-Sainte-Maxence, marking each stage of the journey by dated letters of privy seal.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See above, iii. 27-28.

<sup>2</sup> *Philobiblon*, ch. viii., where Bury is made to speak of the facilities which his official position gave him to collect a store of books. The distinction is drawn between "various offices about the court" and "those concerning the public affairs of the kingdom, namely, the offices of chancellor and treasurer." The distinction is a contemporary one, and holds good whether or not Bury himself wrote the *Philobiblon*.

<sup>3</sup> See above, iii. 17.

<sup>4</sup> *Rot. Parl.* ii. 52-53. "Item le dit Roger, par son dit royal poer, fit mander lettres desouz la targe as plusours grantz chivalers et autres q'ils venissent au roi, queu part q'il feust: et a lur venue les fist charger q'ils s'addressassent d'aler en Gascoigne, ou q'ils feissent fyns et raunsouns a sa volonte." This was one of the articles of Mortimer's condemnation.

<sup>5</sup> See above, iii. 9, 57, n. 1. The king's itinerary abroad has been reconstituted by M. Déprez (*Préliminaires*, pp. 74-76) largely from the privy seals

But Bury was also employed by Edward on duties quite outside those of his own office, notably in certain financial matters that suggest some connection with the increasingly important king's chamber. Thus, on the journey to Pont-Sainte-Maxence, Bury financed the expedition, mainly with moneys borrowed from the Bardi, and sent in elaborate accounts of his expenses, which are still preserved among the wardrobe accounts.<sup>1</sup> Yet again, in December 1332, we are told that "the king cannot be without the presence of his beloved clerk, Richard Bury, both because of things pertaining to the custody of the privy seal and for other reasons."<sup>2</sup> This suggests why one projected mission of Bury to Avignon did not take place. But before long he was certainly employed in France, and he was at Avignon between February and November 1333.<sup>3</sup> We may infer that he, on leaving England, laid down the privy seal without any intention of resuming it, for, being appointed dean of Wells soon after, he then obtained a papal indult for non-residence for three years that he might study at some university.<sup>4</sup> However, he never used this permission, for, on October 14, he was papally provided to the bishopric of Durham. He thus passes away permanently from the history of the privy seal, though later he served Edward as chancellor, treasurer and diplomatist up to 1342. For us his special claim for consideration is that he raised the importance of the office of the privy seal.

The extreme difficulty in determining who held the keepership of the privy seal between 1333 and 1338 should warn us not

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drafted by Bury. He does not, however, mention Bury's participation in the journey, though he notes William Montague's attendance on the king.

<sup>1</sup> *Enr. Accts. (W. and H.)* 2/34. See, for details, above, iv. 236, and nn. 4 and 5. The whole story brings out clearly the interdependence of the privy seal, the wardrobe and the chamber.

<sup>2</sup> *C.C.R., 1330-33*, p. 517; compare *E.A.* 383/12, "tam propter ea que ad custodiam eiusdem sigilli pertinent quam ob alias causas carere non possumus." Thus, *C.P.R., 1330-34*, p. 98, appointed him and Sir Antonio di Passano to borrow the enormous sum of £50,000 in the king's name. The commission was "vacated by surrender," but it shows the extent to which he was empowered to deal with finance. He was soon in actual receipt of £8000 from the Bardi; *ib.* p. 96.

<sup>3</sup> Déprez, *Préliminaires*, p. 94, n. 2.

<sup>4</sup> *C. Pap. Reg. Let.* ii. 392. This is dated Aug. 25, 1333, when Bury was still at Avignon. He had been appointed to Wells by John XXII., who had already given him an indult for non-residence as being engaged in the king's service. Was the licence to study more than a more plausible excuse for absence from his deanery?



to exaggerate the immediate results of Bury's energetic tenure of the office. Between April 1333 and March 1334 I have found no record specifying by name the keeper of the privy seal. It is even possible that Bury himself was nominally continued as keeper during his mission to Avignon, perhaps resuming its duties after his return. The first mention that I have found of another keeper is on March 3, 1334, when Robert Ayleston is described as holding that office.<sup>1</sup> We know Ayleston already as an obscure keeper of the privy seal in 1323-24, some ten years before.<sup>2</sup> After that he went back to his old office, the exchequer, acting as baron from 1324 to 1332, and as treasurer from March 29, 1332, to February 3, 1334.<sup>3</sup> It is strange that Ayleston should revert from the great office of treasurer to the inferior office of keeper of the privy seal, and the transition is the more remarkable since his successor as treasurer was Richard Bury himself, now bishop of Durham. My doubtful conclusion is that Bury may have continued in nominal charge of the seal, even when abroad, and that Ayleston, as treasurer, acted for him. When Bury returned, he exchanged offices with Ayleston. These special circumstances make me hesitate to point the obvious moral, that the appointment of the treasurer of the exchequer to keep the privy seal is an even more striking proof of the growing estimation of that office than had been the appointment of the retiring keeper of the wardrobe to be keeper of the privy seal in 1329. But Ayleston could only have held his new office for a few weeks, for he was already dead on March 21, 1334, on which date a fresh presentation was made to a prebend at Hastings "void by the death of Mr. Robert of Ayleston."<sup>4</sup>

The darkness that shrouds the succession to the privy seal is not yet lightened. We have no record of the date on which Robert Tawton began to act as keeper in 1334, though we know that he remained keeper of the wardrobe until July 30 of that year.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1333-37, pp. 198, 209, mandate to Ayleston to surrender to the exchequer muniments touching Scotland. Was this a transfer of privy seal documents to exchequer custody, or had Ayleston simply omitted to surrender them when he handed over the mass of exchequer records on relinquishing the treasury?

<sup>2</sup> Above, ii. p. 305.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.*; *C.P.R.*, 1330-34, pp. 266, 511; *Foedera*, ii. 839.

<sup>4</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1330-34, pp. 528, 547.

<sup>5</sup> For Tawton's work at the wardrobe and his earlier career, see above, iv. 77-78.

There may well have been some overlapping on transference from one post to another. But Tawton, an old servant of the martyred Stapeldon, was a man whom Edward III. delighted to honour,<sup>1</sup> and it is significant that the transference of Tawton from wardrobe to privy seal is the second instance of such a promotion. How long Tawton remained keeper it is hard even to guess. A dark entry in the rolls of parliament for 1339 says that during his keepership he unjustly persuaded the king to take possession of the temporalities of the provostship of Wells, but leaves us ignorant as to when this seizure took place.<sup>2</sup> It looks as if he held the privy seal until his death, for he is described as keeper on October 28, 1334, and on February 4, 1335,<sup>3</sup> and his death took place soon after the later date, since on February 22 a presentation was made to a prebend vacated by his death, and on the same day the writ for his post-mortem inquest was issued.<sup>4</sup>

The next keeper was Mr. William de la Zouch, of whose earlier and later career we have already spoken.<sup>5</sup> Like Tawton, he was promoted from the wardrobe, but while Tawton was keeper of the wardrobe, Zouch was only controller. From his resignation of the controllership on April 1, 1335, we may date his appointment to the privy seal, and the extreme duration of his custody of that is fixed by his appointment as treasurer of the exchequer on March 24, 1337.<sup>6</sup> We have record evidence that he was acting between November 30, 1335,<sup>7</sup> and March 18, 1337,<sup>8</sup> on which latter date he was granted 1000 marks for his "faithful and laborious services in Scotland, which he does not cease to render, in retaining men-

<sup>1</sup> *Foedera*, ii. 866-867, shows Edward's successive attempts in 1333 to procure for Ayleston and Tawton a provision to the bishopric of St. Andrews.

<sup>2</sup> *Rot. Parl.* ii. 109-110 vaguely dates Tawton's action as "au temps q'il porta le prive seal." He was already provost in 1333 (*C. Pap. Reg. Let.* ii. 387), but his possession of this sinecure was disputed. See, for the whole question, T. S. Holmes' *Register of Ralph of Shrewsbury*, I. lix-lxviii. It may have been Tawton's vengeance on his opponent.

<sup>3</sup> *I.R.* 279.

<sup>4</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1334-38, p. 79, records a presentation on that date to a prebend voided by his death. For the writ for his post-mortem inquest, see *Cal. Inq.* vii. 451. His brother succeeded to his small property in Devonshire.

<sup>5</sup> For Zouch's career see above, iii. 43-44, 55, 116-118; iv. 81, especially n. 4, and 396.

<sup>6</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1334-38, p. 409.

<sup>7</sup> *C. Pap. Reg. Let.* ii. 524, where he is called "queen's clerk and keeper of the king's secret seal," in a letter of the queen asking the pope to prefer him.

<sup>8</sup> *I.R.* 294 shows an overlap, for he is called keeper on May 7, though his successor was acting on that date.

at-arms and others with him." Such services stood in the way of Zouch's performing the routine duties of his office. Thus, on June 29, 1336, the king, who was at Perth, did not know where his keeper of the privy seal was, and therefore was unable to send a warrant under that seal to his chancellor in England, but was compelled to send instead a writ of secret seal to obtain an immediate patent for a grant of lands.<sup>1</sup> Zouch came of warrior stock and was especially busy against the Scots, retaining his martial habits even when archbishop of York.<sup>2</sup>

The next keeper was Mr. Richard of Bynteworth, that is, of Bentworth, Hampshire. We find him acting from April 28, 1337,<sup>3</sup> to July 2, 1338.<sup>4</sup> A doctor of civil law, his early career was that of an ecclesiastical lawyer. However, in 1315 he was sworn on Edward II.'s council,<sup>5</sup> and in 1334, and for the next three years, he was mainly employed as a king's clerk in important missions to Scotland, France and the papal curia, his salary indicating that he was a man of high rank.<sup>6</sup> He was still holding the privy seal when on May 4, 1338, he was elected bishop of London. He received his temporalities on May 24,<sup>7</sup> and was consecrated on July 12. As bishop-elect he was transferred, on July 6, from privy seal to chancery.<sup>8</sup> On December 8, 1339, he died.

With Bentworth's retirement from the keepership the first stage in the history of the privy seal under Edward III. came to an end. Though it is difficult to trace accurately the work of the privy seal during the first twelve years of his reign, or even to give precisely the periods of office of each keeper, we may well believe

<sup>1</sup> The writ in *C.W.* 1330/22 is printed in Maxwell-Lyte's *Great Seal*, p. 104, with interesting comments.

<sup>2</sup> For his part in the battle of Neville's Cross see *Lanercost*, p. 350, and *Anonimale Chron.*, pp. 24-27.

<sup>3</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1337-39, p. 130. *Ib.* p. 157, he is called "the king's clerk and secretary."

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* p. 442: Order to exchequer to pay his wages within the court and his daily expenses without it, according to a bill of the keeper of the wardrobe. Compare *ib.* p. 291, a mandate of Feb. 6 to the keeper of the wardrobe, to pay wages of 20s. a day when out of court and the "accustomed wages and fees within court."

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.*, 1318-23, p. 503.

<sup>6</sup> See, for instance, *C.P.R.*, 1330-34, p. 564; *ib.*, 1334-38, pp. 3, 23, 157, 301, 347. He also served on commissions at home; *ib.*, 1334-38, p. 143. His salary was always at the high rate of 13s. 4d. a day in England and 20s. a day beyond seas, with an allowance for expenses; *C.C.R.*, 1333-37, pp. 285, 546-547, 611-612.

<sup>7</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1338-40, p. 86.

<sup>8</sup> *Foedera*, ii. 1047.



that, as a public instrument, it was becoming increasingly important. Its keepership was at least a stage higher in the official hierarchy than it had been ; its clerks men of greater capacity and promise, and its action looked upon with less suspicion than under the ordainers ; it was, indeed, moving towards the position of a lesser office of state. Yet the clerks of the seal still had their quarters in Westminster palace,<sup>1</sup> and were still "staying continually" with the king.<sup>2</sup> All the keepers continued to be described as household clerks, resident continually with the king ; they took wages and allowances from the wardrobe ; and both Bentworth and Bury only went out of the household when they were promoted to the chancery and treasury. Two new conditions were, however, now imposed upon this seal. A new rôle was assigned to it by the Walton ordinances, and the French war took it away from England for years together with the king. It was, besides, to be administered by the ablest and most radical of Edward's officers, William Kilsby. Not unnaturally a new era dawned in its history.

The story of the Walton ordinances has already been told,<sup>3</sup> and there is no need here to do more than recapitulate, in outline, the part assigned by them to the privy seal. Both chancery and exchequer were to be, in a sense, subject to its control by an extension of the principle of requiring warrants under privy seal as the condition precedent to the issue of chancery writs or of exchequer payments. Chancery was forbidden to issue writs, outside ordinary routine, without authorisation under the privy seal. This, in effect, threw upon the privy seal the obligation, already largely assumed, to draft the substance, even the phrasing, of a multitude of chancery writs. The chancery clerks were content, as a rule, to copy, or translate, the words of their warrant, and it followed that those who fixed the form of the writs were, in the long run, likely to suggest the policy underlying them. In the

<sup>1</sup> See *E.A.* 469/13, which shows that from 4-7 Edward III. there was a "camera clericorum de priuato sigillo sub scaccario," the door of which was then under repair. I owe this reference to Miss Ivy M. Cooper. The significance of this must not be strained. Residence with the king was incompatible with residence at Westminster. I suspect "camera" here only means the headquarters of the office.

<sup>2</sup> For instance, Henry Ingelby in 1341, and Reginald Donington in 1342 ; *C.P.R.*, 1340-43, pp. 119, 392.

<sup>3</sup> See above, iii. 69-71.

same way the exchequer was forbidden to make payments without either a chancery writ of *liberate*, warranted by privy seal, or a direct privy seal mandate. To ensure compliance with these requirements, privy seal warrants for issue were to be enrolled and counter-rolled, and both rolls and counter-rolls were to be produced at an annual audit before a special auditing committee.

There was nothing in these provisions to make the keeper of the seal a minister of state, like the chancellor or the treasurer. On the contrary, his special function was not to collaborate with the officers of state, but rather to check, control and criticise their action in the interests of the royal prerogative. The most ingenious sections of the Walton ordinances were those which combined the old machinery of the wardrobe secretariat with the new machinery of the glorified and enlarged chamber.<sup>1</sup> By them the keeper of the privy seal and the clerk of the chamber were given joint supervision and control over the ordinary ministers of the crown. It is unlikely that this control was ever effective; it is not even certain that it was ever brought into operation. Yet the idea underlying it was clearly to use the privy seal to safeguard prerogative interests by keeping a strict watch over the great officers of state. Put in the terms of the moment, the practical problem was how to carry on the war. That problem could be most easily solved by subjecting the ministers of state to the combined control of chamber, wardrobe and privy seal. The ministries remained in England; the household and the privy seal went abroad with the king. In effect it was the control of the state by the household, and the chief instrument of the household was the privy seal.

Other conditions complicated the problem of the position of the privy seal. The Walton ordinances dealt simply with it as a source of warrants to chancery and exchequer; but already it had become a normal method of directly declaring the royal will. Those writs, which had direct or original force, were at least as numerous as, and a great deal more important than, those which simply set in motion the machinery of the chancery.<sup>2</sup> Action by writ of privy seal was becoming so common, within

<sup>1</sup> For the expansion of the chamber at this period, see above, iv. 238-311.

<sup>2</sup> It is unfortunate that M. Déprez in his *Études de diplomatie anglaise* bases his account of the privy seal almost exclusively on chancery warrants, and so tends to obscure the more vital and original aspects of its operations.



certain limitations, that men were beginning to see in action through the privy seal as much a matter of course as action inspired by writ of chancery. Though there was still some suspicion of the writ of privy seal interfering in legal proceedings, we seldom now read of the complaints of the abuses of the privy seal which were so common under Edward I. and Edward II. We have seen how the writ of privy seal was ousting the chancery writ of *liberate* as a mandate for exchequer issues. Already the summoning of councils, even great councils, by privy seal had become usual,<sup>1</sup> leaving the great seal for the convocation of solemn parliaments. And the daily transactions of the king's council came so often to be enforced by writs of privy seal that, before long, the office of privy seal was largely utilised as a council secretariat, just as chancery supplied parliament with the clerks who recorded its proceedings, carried out its routine work and formulated its methods of conducting business. As a result of such developments, the keeper of the privy seal was becoming a third minister of state, to be named with, though after, the two traditional great officers. There is an obvious confusion here, for there is a plain incompatibility between the privy seal as a control of ministers and the privy seal as a ministerial office. Could an inchoate ministry of state control effectively the well-established offices the chancery and exchequer? Was not the task imposed upon the privy seal at Walton antagonistic to its natural development towards independence as another office of state?

The Middle Ages were not logical, and contradictory tendencies lurked in other departments than that of the privy seal. Moreover, immediate practical conditions overbore any possible theoretical considerations. Inevitably then the particular circumstances of the moment postponed the solution of theoretical questions until quieter times. All other considerations were subordinate to that of carrying through the campaigning in the Netherlands and compelling the ministers in England to supply the king and his soldiers with the sinews of war. As the means of controlling and coercing the chancery and treasury, which

<sup>1</sup> Under Edward II. councils had apparently often been summoned under privy seal, especially when the king was at a distance from the spot where they were to meet; see instances in Conway Davies, pp. 574-576.

were left at home in England, the scheme of the Walton ordinances seemed admirably designed, the more so since the whole privy seal staff, and the effective part of the chamber staff, were in attendance on the king in the Netherlands. Yet the stream of mandates that flowed from Brabant to Westminster failed to produce the desired results. Chancery and treasury could not send the king what it had not got, and there appeared no way of stimulating them into greater activity. Accordingly the Walton policy of control broke down almost as soon as it was tried.

The development of the privy seal as a third ministry fared otherwise. The very fact that the energetic Kilsby received the seal at the moment of the king's departure to the Netherlands showed that Edward intended to make his favourite chamber clerk the autocrat of the administration overseas. Following the precedent of Edward I. and John Benstead in 1297-98, Kilsby was given the custody of the great seal, which accompanied the king abroad, even though its chancellor remained in England. This made Kilsby, in Mr. Kingsford's happy anticipation of modern phrase, "at once minister in attendance and the king's private secretary."<sup>1</sup> We might go further and call Kilsby the "sole minister" or the "prime minister" of the king abroad. How thoroughly he did his work we have seen already.<sup>2</sup> There is no wonder that the foreign allies who thronged Edward's camp and court called Kilsby the king's chancellor, and Kilsby was not likely to be displeased by such an address. Anyhow, he is styled "William Kilsby our chancellor," in a royal letter of which he doubtless had the drafting, and in an indenture between the king, the keeper of the privy seal and the keeper of the wardrobe (Norwell, called "our treasurer"), on the one hand, and on the other various merchants to whom jewels were issued by way of wages.<sup>3</sup> Nor was this without precedent. Had not great Petrarch called Richard Bury chancellor when he was only keeper of the privy seal? <sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See the late C. L. Kingsford's valuable paper on "John de Benstede and his missions," in *Essays in History presented to R. L. Poole*, ed. H. W. C. Davis (Oxford, 1927), pp. 332-359, especially pp. 335-337.

<sup>2</sup> See above, iii. 84-87, and especially pp. 99-100 and notes.

<sup>3</sup> *Chan. Misc.* 30/8; *Anc. Deeds*, L.S. 303.

<sup>4</sup> See above, iii. 100, n. 2.

Beyond the Pyrenees, was not the keeper of the small seal habitually called a chancellor ?

Kilsby's custody of the two seals meant that he controlled both the whole staff of the privy seal office, which had followed him abroad, and the group of chancery clerks which had gone with the great seal to the Netherlands.<sup>1</sup> Among the privy seal clerks was John Winwick, and conspicuous among the chancery clerks was Dr. John Thoresby, king's notary. Both these men we shall hear of again as keepers of the privy seal. Moreover, Kilsby was still closely bound to his old comrades of the chamber, notably to Thomas Hatfield, his successor as clerk of the chamber, and to John Offord, who, though not specifically connected with the chamber, was in the Netherlands with a staff of clerks, learning, doubtless, how to take Kilsby's place when he vacated the keepership. Kilsby had, therefore, an exceptionally strong group of fellow-workers, but he alone of the clerks belonged to the little band that controlled policy. Small wonder that, with everything at his feet, he even, upon occasion, imported some of the technique of the privy seal office into the drafting of chancery writs.<sup>2</sup> Kilsby was thus more than a third minister of state ; he was the sole minister of state controlling policy, and his mandates to chancellor and treasurer in England were simple injunctions to carry out the king's wishes and supply him with the necessary funds. Moreover, the precedent set in 1338 for conferring on the keeper of the privy seal the custody of the great seal when the king was abroad was faithfully followed for the next twenty years. It was last observed in 1359-60 in the double keepership, in France, of Winwick,<sup>3</sup> who, as a clerk of the privy seal, had had the advantage of personal contact with the working of Kilsby's dual charge in the Netherlands. No wonder the net result was the consolidation of the keepership as a quasi-political office, and the employment of privy seal writs in diplomatic and other business of high importance. The wonder is that it took another generation to complete the process. But this was the result of mediaeval conservatism, in no wise mitigated by the fantastic rôle claimed for the keeper in the Walton ordinances. These had ceased to be operative before

<sup>1</sup> See above, iii. 85-87.

<sup>2</sup> See above, iii. 86, n. 7.

<sup>3</sup> See above, iii. 222-223, 225-227.



Edward left the Netherlands, and neither the king nor Kilsby showed the slightest desire to revive them during the considerable span of curialist predominance that followed.

Back in England with Edward III. in February 1340, Kilsby received expenses for himself and clerks *extra curiam* from February 20 to May 26.<sup>1</sup> His position was obscured by the Stratfordian reaction, and it is, perhaps, significant that he did not return to Flanders with the king in June. However, little help came from the English ministers, and soon the king called back Kilsby to his councils. It would be interesting to know what happened to the privy and great seals between Edward's departure in June and that of Kilsby more than a month later.<sup>2</sup> We only know that, when he reached the Netherlands, he was again made keeper of the two seals, and became the instigator, or chief agent, of the king's bid for freedom in November 1340. To recount in detail Kilsby's share in that project would be to tell a tale already told.<sup>3</sup> But his simultaneous custody, from November 30 to December 14, of the great seal, of the privy seal and of the rolls of chancery<sup>4</sup> must not be regarded as an indication that he aspired to be sole minister in England as beyond the sea. Rather it was as the agent of the most violent acts of the angry king that Kilsby took the lead, denouncing archbishop Stratford to the Londoners in the Guildhall,<sup>5</sup> or making his way to Canterbury, on pretext of a pilgrimage, to entice Stratford out of sanctuary, and summon him in the public streets to cross the seas to Brabant.<sup>6</sup> Naturally the behaviour of Kilsby excited the severest opposition. Parliament was, indeed, so hostile that he only escaped its denunciations by his silent withdrawal from the parliament chamber. Inevitably the victorious opposition demanded the appointment of ministers in parliament, and, borrowing the very language of the ordainers, insisted upon the nomination of *un clerk couenable pur garder son priue seal*.<sup>7</sup> In the view of the conservative magnates

<sup>1</sup> *M.B.E.* 203/96d.

<sup>2</sup> He was preparing to depart with his men and horses on July 24; *C.C.R.*, 1339-41, p. 434.

<sup>3</sup> See above, iii. 119-133.

<sup>4</sup> *Foedera*, ii. 1142.

<sup>5</sup> *Murimuth*, p. 118.

<sup>6</sup> *Lit. Cantuar.* ii. 226-231, where prior Eastry gives a vivid account of Kilsby's scandalous and undignified behaviour.

<sup>7</sup> *Rot. Parl.* ii. 128. In this petition the keeper of the privy seal figures on the list after the keeper and controller of the wardrobe, but, in the petition that

he was still a mere officer of the household, without right to take a place among the magnates of the land.<sup>1</sup>

Despite the estates, Edward retained Kilsby as keeper of the privy seal. He was no longer able to pose as a leading minister, but he took part, at the head of a considerable force, in the king's early winter campaign in Scotland in 1341, though he was back in London by January 18, 1342. Between that day and June 4, Kilsby received from the wardrobe expenses for himself and his clerks, being *extra curiam* at London and elsewhere for the king's council for ninety-two days.<sup>2</sup> On the latter date he vacated the seal, certainly not in disgrace but rather because he preferred to take a prominent share in the projected campaign in Brittany.<sup>3</sup> With this his political career came to an end. His subsequent adventures as soldier and pilgrim have little relation to administrative history.

A successor to him was found in Mr. John Offord, archdeacon of Ely, his close associate in the Netherlands in 1338-39.<sup>4</sup> Since then, Offord's main occupations had been diplomatic. He was sent straight to the papal court at Avignon, where, from May 1339 to May 1340, he was king's proctor.<sup>5</sup> On April 5, 1342, he was made chief commissioner to treat with the French for a truce,<sup>6</sup> and on May 24 he was sent, with others, to the Netherlands to negotiate with Edward's allies there.<sup>7</sup> This embassy was, however, diverted from its purpose as soon as it had crossed the Channel, when, at the request of a papal envoy, Offord alone, on the authority of a writ dated June 4, was despatched to France to

officers should be sworn to keep the law, he is put before the keeper of the wardrobe. In both he is placed among the officers of the household.

<sup>1</sup> See above, iii. 131-132.

<sup>2</sup> *M.B.E.* 204/82: "Domino Willelmo de Kildesby, custodi priuati sigilli, moranti de precepto regis apud Londinium et alibi extra curiam ad consilium ipsius domini regis per <sup>xx</sup>iiij xij dies per vices, inter xviiij<sup>m</sup> diem Jan. anno xv<sup>o</sup> et <sup>xx</sup>iiij<sup>m</sup> diem Junii proximum sequentem, percipienti per diem <sup>xx</sup>xs. pro expensis suis, <sup>xx</sup>iiij xij. *li.*" He was still acting as keeper on May 15; *C.P.R.*, 1340-43, pp. 432-433.

<sup>3</sup> See above, iii. 162-163, 169.

<sup>4</sup> *M.B.E.* 203/134d. shows Offord received 2 marks a day for wages and expenses of himself and his clerks, and also wages for nine men-at-arms, from July 22, 1338, to May 27, 1339. See also above, iii. 160, n. 2. His name derives from the Huntingdonshire Offords, with both of which he had relations; *C.C.R.*, 1330-33, p. 473; *ib.*, 1337-39, p. 164.

<sup>5</sup> *M.B.E.* 203/121 shows that, from May 28, 1339, to May 27, 1340, at least, he was "procurator regis in curia romana," receiving for his office 50 marks in the wardrobe.

<sup>6</sup> *Foedera*, ii. 1191.

<sup>7</sup> *Ib.* ii. 1196.



treat for peace.<sup>1</sup> There is no doubt that Offord was also appointed in absence keeper of the privy seal on Kilsby's retirement on the same June 4, 1342, for on that day Mr. John Thoresby was assigned by king and council to keep the privy seal "while Mr. John Offord, keeper of the same seal, was engaged on the king's business beyond sea."<sup>2</sup> It is seldom up to this date that we can fix precisely by record evidence the appointment of a new keeper and the outgoing of his predecessor.

During Offord's absence the whole burden of the seal fell on his deputy. The clerks and office of the seal were plainly with him, and he received the normal twenty shillings a day for his expenses and those of his clerks from June 4 to 24. On this later date Offord seems to have come back from a short and unsuccessful mission, and to have taken over the seal and clerks from Thoresby. At least more normal means were provided for the maintenance of the office. We learn, however, that Offord was still seldom in court. Between June 24, 1342, and May 31, 1343, he was away 150 days, at the council in London, and elsewhere on the king's business, drawing the usual twenty shillings expenses for each of these days.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, between May 31, 1343, and April 10, 1344, he was much out of court, chiefly at London for the council.<sup>4</sup> Thus in less than two years this nominal household officer was 428 days out of court—more often, indeed, out of court than within it. We know that during the earlier part of the former period he was in Brittany with the king's expedition, between October 5, 1342,<sup>5</sup> and March 2, 1343.<sup>6</sup> Between these

<sup>1</sup> *Foedera*, ii. 1199, from the French roll. It is much to be wished that the Public Record Office would lighten the path of the diplomatic historian by calendering these French rolls, now unhappily named "treaty rolls."

<sup>2</sup> *M.B.E.* 204/161: "Magistro Johanni de Thoresby, clerico assignato per regem et consilium suum ad portandum et custodiendum sigillum regis priuatum, dummodo magister Johannes Dufford, custos eiusdem sigilli, extitit in negociis regis in partibus transmarinis pro expensis suis et clericorum eiusdem sigilli a <sup>o</sup>iiiij die Junii anno regis xvi<sup>o</sup> usque xxiiij<sup>m</sup> diem eiusdem mensis, utroque die computato, per xxi dies, percipienti per diem xxs. . . . xxili."

<sup>3</sup> *M.B.E.* 204/82: "Johanni Dufford, clerico, custodi priuati sigilli, assignato per regem ad morandum ad consilium ipsius regis apud London. et alibi extra curiam circa negocia ipsius domini regis per cl. dies . . . cl. li."

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* 204/83d.

<sup>5</sup> *Foedera*, ii. 1212, the date when he received the great seal on shipboard at Sandwich.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.* ii. 1220, the date when he restored the great seal to chancellor Parving at Westminster.

dates Offord, like Kilsby before him, kept both the great and the privy seals, and was accompanied in his wanderings beyond sea by the clerks of his office. He followed the usual fashion of serving as a banneret with a considerable retinue, but his chief work was perhaps the negotiation of the truce of Malestroit.<sup>1</sup> Even when back in England, he was, as we have seen, still more often the minister of state, attending councils outside the court, than the household servant, following the court from place to place. The council had so far become a council of government that it met, normally at London, outside the court. The privy seal was already so important as the seal normally used for giving executive force to conciliar action that it was more necessary for its keeper to be with the council than with the court. Offord may have been exceptional, but the precise details we have of his movements show how the keeper was becoming a minister of state.

No doubt Offord's special value as a diplomatist enhanced the tendency, already strong, for the keeper of the privy seal to be more often out of court than within it. Appointed by papal provision to the deanery of Lincoln, Offord was, within six months of his return from Brittany, sent on a strong special embassy to Avignon to treat of a final peace with France. His description in the writ of appointment as keeper of the privy seal shows that there was no intention of making this foreign service involve his resignation.<sup>2</sup> To the hopeless quest of peace was later added the more practical demand for a dispensation for a double marriage between the reigning houses of England and Brabant.<sup>3</sup> He was long at Avignon without discharging either mission. The length of his stay must have resulted in other hands being called upon to keep the privy seal. Of his subsequent distinguished career as chancellor and archbishop elect, and of his death from the plague, we have spoken already.<sup>4</sup>

Thomas Hatfield, the chamber clerk who had succeeded Kilsby as receiver of the chamber, and had been constantly in attendance

<sup>1</sup> *Murimuth*, p. 130.

<sup>2</sup> *Foedera*, iii. 18. In this act, dated August 3, he is "magistrum J. de Offord, decanum Lincolnie et custodem priuati sigilli nostri." See also above, iii. 160, n. 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Foedera*, iii. 25. In this act, dated October 26, Offord is "dilectum secretarium nostrum." He was still at Avignon on January 20, 1345; *ib.* p. 27. Thoresby was among his associates.

<sup>4</sup> See above, iii. 160-161, 206.

on Edward both at home and abroad,<sup>1</sup> was promoted from that office to the keepership of the privy seal. We have positive record that by October 12, 1344, it was known at Avignon that he was already acting as keeper.<sup>2</sup> Like his predecessors, he was followed to the wars by a contingent of men-at-arms. We know little of his activities as keeper, the only occasions on which he received that name in the close rolls being when mandates were issued to the keepers of the wardrobe to pay him his accustomed wages and expenses out of court.<sup>3</sup> Before he went out of office he was on May 8, 1345, elected by the unwilling monks as bishop of Durham, in succession to a former keeper, Richard Bury. The pope ignored the election, but appointed him by provision.<sup>4</sup> It is perhaps symptomatic of the increasing dignity of the privy seal that Hatfield retained its custody for some time after his election and provision. He was still keeper on June 23, but on July 3 Edward III. went to Flanders. Hatfield, forced to stay in England for his consecration, had to give up the seal, being consoled, perhaps, by being put on the council of regency.<sup>5</sup> This loose and lay-minded official had a long career as a bishop, distinguished only by his munificence as a builder in his cathedral and castle, and as carrying out at Oxford some of his predecessor Bury's literary schemes. He obtained from Clement VI. a qualified exemption from the jurisdiction of the archbishop of York, but remained constantly at variance with him. It is interesting that, later on, his metropolitan was his successor at the privy seal, John Thoresby.

Thoresby's earlier and later careers are well known to us.<sup>6</sup> Since 1341 he had been keeper of the chancery rolls,<sup>7</sup> and he was the first chancery clerk to keep the privy seal since Richard

<sup>1</sup> For him, see above, iii. 87, 114, 169; iv. pp. 257, 287-288. He had never taken "a degree in science," and was later described as "fearing not the rod of discipline"; *C. Pap. R. Pet.* i. 472. Yet the papal chancery sometimes describes him as "master"; *ib. Let.* iii. 79.

<sup>2</sup> *C. Pap. R. Let.* iii. 11, summarises a letter from Avignon, dated October 12, addressed to him as "keeper of the secret seal," and another of November 21 as "king's secretary." Both these phrases mean, I think, to a clerk of the papal curia, keeper of the privy seal.

<sup>3</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1343-46, pp. 511 and 536. The dates were April 6 and June 23, 1345.

<sup>4</sup> See above, iii. 220 and n. 3.

<sup>5</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1343-45, p. 487.

<sup>6</sup> See above, iii. 85-86, 115, 168-169, 176, 206-207, 212, 214-217, 442; iv. 123.

<sup>7</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1341-43, p. 118; *Foedera*, ii. 1151.



Airmyn.<sup>1</sup> However, his early experience had included the direction of the chamber of his original patron, archbishop Melton, and he had been in close association with the last three keepers of the privy seal, acquiring direct insight into his new duties when, in June 1342, he had acted as temporary keeper during Offord's absence abroad. The definite appointment of Thoresby may be safely dated July 3, 1345, the day Edward III. began his short and abortive Flemish visit, which lasted until July 30. Thoresby accompanied his master and, like Kilsby and Offord before him, combined the custody of the great seal with that of the privy seal, receiving the great seal on July 3, when on shipboard at Sandwich, and returning it to chancellor Sadington on July 30 at Westminster.<sup>2</sup> Next year he similarly accompanied Edward on his memorable march through Normandy to the gates of Paris, witnessing the victory of Crécy and the long siege of Calais, attended, of course, by his armed *comitua*. On July 2, 1346, Offord, now chancellor, delivered to Thoresby the great seal before the altar of Fareham church and received from him the "seal of absence." All through the expedition the great seal seems to have been reserved for emergencies, and the mass of correspondence between the king and the administration in England, drafted by Thoresby, was authenticated by privy seal. Such correspondence was, of course, impossible while Edward was marching up the Seine valley, but it reappeared when he settled down in fixed quarters before the walls of Calais.

During the siege of Calais the dual government of the English regency and of the officials attending the king worked more satisfactorily than at any other time, as is well illustrated by the letters of privy seal sent from before Calais to the author-

<sup>1</sup> See above, ii. 306, n. 1; and v. 5-6.

<sup>2</sup> *Foedera*, iii. 50, 53. In the earlier close roll endorsement the name of the recipient of the great seal is not mentioned, but in the latter it is definitely said that Thoresby, "*custos priuati sigilli regis*," transferred the great seal to the chancellor. I feel sure that Offord, on joining the regent's council on July 1, surrendered the privy seal, and that Thoresby at once succeeded him. The omission to mention his office on July 3 was probably accidental, but possibly Thoresby's appointment was not complete at the earlier date. It is certain, however, that he kept both seals on and beyond the sea, and was paid £60 on October 14, 1345, as expenses "*extra curiam*" and as wages for himself and his men-at-arms. He also obtained (*I.R.* 336/4) part payment of his arrears in Norwell's time, *i.e.* from July 11, 1338, to May 17, 1340; *Enr. Accts. (W. and H.)* 2/2, 15, 37. This was, of course, long before his keepership.

ities in England. The presence, with Thoresby, of the whole staff of the privy seal secured the efficiency of the office as a single secretariat attached to the king's person.<sup>1</sup> Its activity can be traced, not only in the numerous surviving writs of privy seal of the period,<sup>2</sup> but also in the records in the issue rolls of the wages and expenses of Thoresby, his clerks and his troop of soldiers.<sup>3</sup> The mechanism, which worked indifferently while the king was moving from place to place, ran smoothly enough throughout the long stay of Edward before the walls of Calais, when the administration hitherto used for the army was developed to complement the administration left behind in England. Under such conditions the privy seal and its office proved quite competent to discharge the functions of the chancery as well as to keep the administration with the king in close and harmonious touch with the regency. Without design, or consciousness of innovation, the privy seal approached more and more towards the status of a new ministry of state.

Thoresby's position was eminently strong. He had under him such competent and rising clerks as Bolton and Newbold, Ingelby and Winwick, the two latter being of considerable importance in the growth of the privy seal. To them we must add the veteran John Carlton, a man of thirty years' experience in the office, and raised from it to be a member of the king's council beyond the seas. Kilsby himself was with the army until his death at Calais in September 1346. Another ex-keeper, Hatfield, now bishop of Durham, was present, while a third, John Offord, controlled the secretariat in England as chancellor. So well equipped was the privy seal office that it could go on by itself, even in the absence of its chief. When personal liaison between the home and beyond seas governments was required, sometimes Thoresby himself went over to England. Thus, in September 1346, out of a delegation of five household officers, sent to inform the parliament of the victory of Calais,

<sup>1</sup> For all these points, see also above, iii. 164-170, and the authorities there quoted in the notes.

<sup>2</sup> Notably in the writs printed by Viard and Déprez, *Chronique de Jean le Bel*, ii. pp. 337-352.

<sup>3</sup> See especially, Wetwang's wardrobe accounts in *E.A.* 390/12. See also *I.R.* 339, 340. Many of the references are conveniently brought together in Wrottesley's *Crécy and Calais*.



one was Thoresby and another was John Carlton. In England Thoresby seems to have continued to issue writs of privy seal despite the fact that the king himself was still before the walls of Calais.<sup>1</sup> On his return to Calais, he went away, in October, on what proved an abortive mission, to treat before two cardinals with "our adversary of France."<sup>2</sup> Before February 19, 1347, he was once more back in England, reporting "certain secret matters touching the king" to the council at home,<sup>3</sup> and on yet a third occasion was sent from Calais to London, receiving each time a grant for expenses.<sup>4</sup> Thoresby was still in office when, on May 23, he was appointed bishop of St. David's by papal provision.<sup>5</sup> He was described as keeper, even in August,<sup>6</sup> but before his consecration, on September 23, the privy seal had passed from him to Mr. Simon Islip. Of Thoresby's subsequent glories as chancellor and archbishop of York, enough has already been said. His career was more distinguished than that of any previous keeper of the privy seal.

Simon Islip was an Oxford doctor of laws and a canon lawyer by profession until the favour of archbishop Stratford brought him into the king's service through the channel of diplomacy. Engaged in 1345 on the king's council,<sup>7</sup> he came into prominence as a member of the council of regency for Lionel, the king's son, during Edward III.'s absence beyond sea in 1346-47. His position on the board of regency is further evidence of the growing tendency to regard the privy seal as an ordinary part of the machine of state, for he owed his appointment to the fact that he had been made keeper of the regent's special privy seal. Earlier regents had had their lesser seal for official purposes. But this seal seems to have been their personal seal, though used

<sup>1</sup> See above, iii. 168, nn. 2 and 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Foedera*, iii. 92.

<sup>3</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1346-49, p. 238. His associate this time was Ralph, baron of Stafford.

<sup>4</sup> *I.R.* 339/32, 41, 44. On the last occasion the amount was £100.

<sup>5</sup> *C. Pap. R. Let.* iii. 240, where the provision describes him as "bishop elect," a phrase suggesting an earlier election.

<sup>6</sup> *C. Pap. R. Let.* iii. 218; cf. 225, where he is also called by the papal chancery "keeper of the secret seal." Edward III.'s petition for his reservation for the deanery of Lichfield more accurately describes him as keeper of the privy seal; *ib. Pet.* p. 115.

<sup>7</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1343-45, p. 536. He was granted an annuity of 50 marks "that he might better support the charges thereby incumbent upon him."

freely for the authentication of state documents. Ordinarily, the sons of Edward III. had not both great and privy seals. They had but one seal, with one keeper and one sealing office, and that single seal was of the privy seal type. When the king's son, however tender were his years, became regent, he needed a great, as well as a privy, seal. This great seal was supplied by the seal of absence kept by the chancellor. Similarly the personal seal of the young regent took the place of the privy seal, and, as we have seen, the "regent's warrants," which go back to the thirteenth century,<sup>1</sup> were documents issued under these seals.

Despite these precedents, there was a modest element of innovation in the sealing arrangements for the regency of Lionel of Antwerp in 1346-47. To begin with, a special seal for Lionel as keeper was made and paid for by the exchequer.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, an "office of the keeper's seal" was set up as a government department, which was provided with the wax and parchment necessary for its operations at the cost of the king's wardrobe. Secondly, over this new office a special keeper of the regent's seal was set, and the choice for this post of so experienced and able a king's clerk as Mr. Simon Islip,<sup>3</sup> and his appointment as one of the select council of regency, show that both the personal and the official importance of the position were strongly stressed. As far as possible, Islip's position was assimilated to that of the keeper of the privy seal, though he was officially styled "keeper of the regent's seal," and the seal itself, a seal of the privy seal type, was called the "regent's seal." Moreover, Islip received exactly the same wages as the keeper of the privy seal when out of court, namely, twenty shillings a day. These wages were paid directly from the exchequer, which, as from Henry III.'s time onwards,<sup>4</sup> discharged many of the functions of the wardrobe, whenever the wardrobe accompanied the king beyond sea. Though the regular office and the four clerks of the privy seal went abroad with

<sup>1</sup> See above, iii. 165-166.

<sup>2</sup> See above, iii. 166, n. 1. On February 17, 1347, this was paid for by the exchequer to the keeper of the wardrobe. The new privy seal, ordered in 1340, was not paid for until January 20, 1346; *I.R.* 336/25.

<sup>3</sup> For the possibility of Islip holding a similar position during Lionel's brief regency in 1345, see above, iii. 166. He was certainly, as in 1346-47, a prominent member of the council of regency; *Foedera*, iii. 50.

<sup>4</sup> See above, i. 266-267, 276, 294; ii. 4-5.

Thoresby, Islip had an adequate staff to man his "office of the regent's seal." The obvious inference from these facts is, as we have just said, that the privy seal had now become so normal a part of the state machinery that the administration at home was not properly equipped unless it had some instrument corresponding to it. It was a real advance when the exchequer directly provided for the support of the office. We shall see that the precedent was not forgotten during the next generation.

The fact that Islip was paid by the exchequer enables us to date the period during which he was responsible for Lionel's seal, namely, from June 21, 1346, until September 27, 1347.<sup>1</sup> His attendance at Westminster was only interrupted by a mission to Scotland and the north in June to July 1347.<sup>2</sup> The approaching consecration of Thoresby to St. Davids made necessary a new appointment to the privy seal of the king, and the appointment of Islip as Thoresby's successor is evidence of his success in his previous office. Henry Chaddesden succeeded Islip as keeper of the regent's seal apparently on September 16, 1347.<sup>3</sup> But his tenure of office was short, for the dual government from Westminster and Calais, which had worked without a hitch, continued only until the surrender of Calais.

Conversations for a truce with France followed the capture of Calais, and Islip's presence was required to take up the custody of the seal and assist in the negotiations. Accordingly, he was allowed a grant of £200 for the cost of his travelling equipment.<sup>4</sup> Like Thoresby, he was from the beginning responsible for the great as well as the privy seal, and he reached Calais in time to participate in the conclusion of the truce sealed on September 28, 1347.<sup>5</sup> A month later he crossed the channel to Sandwich with

<sup>1</sup> *I.R.* 339/16, 33, 38. See also above, iii. 165-166, and 165, n. 4.

<sup>2</sup> *I.R.* 339/16.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* 341/6. This is the date given in the issue rolls, but it suggests either that Chaddesden did not immediately enter office on his appointment, since Islip is recorded as being paid up to September 27, or else a careless scribe. Chaddesden was "nuper custos" on December 17, 1347; *ib.* 340/21. Thoresby is then described as "nuper custos priuati sigilli et etiam magni sigilli coram Calesia"; *E.A.* 390/12, f. 84.

<sup>4</sup> *I.R.* 340/16, 24: "in subsidium apparatus sui nuper eunti versus regem apud Caleys ad portandum priuatum sigillum regis."

<sup>5</sup> *Foedera*, iii. 136-138. He is described as "magister Symon de Islep, custos sigilli regii secreti." But this was a document drafted by the two mediating cardinals, who naturally used the formula customary in the Avignon curia.



the king. The dual government formally ended when, on October 15, chancellor Offord handed over to Islip his seal of absence and when, next day, Islip surrendered the great seal to its natural custodian.<sup>1</sup> Henceforth Islip's sole office was the keepership of the privy seal. It is significant that his 20s. a day allowance was to be paid to him from the wardrobe whether he was outside or within the court. The exact date of his retirement is unknown because, on his becoming keeper, he nominally drew his wages from the wardrobe, so that the invaluable testimony of the issue rolls becomes indefinite as to dates.<sup>2</sup> We may feel pretty sure that he resigned the seal some time in the autumn or early winter of 1349, when he became archbishop of Canterbury.<sup>3</sup>

The times were depressing. Since archbishop Stratford's death a year earlier, his two successors, Offord and Bradwardine, had died of the Black Death. But luckier than his predecessors, Islip survived the plague, and sat on the throne of St. Augustine until 1367.<sup>4</sup> As archbishop, however, he is outside the ken of the

<sup>1</sup> *Foedera*, iii. 139.

<sup>2</sup> We know that Islip was still keeper when, on June 20, Thomas Clopton, keeper of the wardrobe, was instructed to account with him for his wages and pay him 20s. a day for time past and henceforth, "*so long as he has that custody*"; *C.C.R.*, 1349-54, p. 34. The exchequer continued in fact to pay Islip, but its payments were charged to the keeper who received them by "the hand of" Islip. The dates covered by the payments were no longer a concern of the exchequer. The exchequer itself made such a payment on October 3, 1349, to keeper Clopton "*per manus magistri Simonis de Islip, custodis priuati sigilli, super vadiis et expensis suis*"; *I.R.* 350/1. This seems good evidence that he was still keeper. He was consecrated archbishop on December 20, 1349. Yet there were payments on May 3, 1350, for Islip's wages, robes and expenses, when, as a consecrated archbishop he is curiously described as "Mr. Simon de Islep"; *ib.* 354/8. These may, therefore, have been payment for arrears. But an entry of February 14, 1351, first definitely describes Islip, still called by his personal name, as "*nuper custos*"; *ib.* 355/31. Yet Northburgh was already keeper before November 11, 1350. See below, p. 27, n. 7. We may feel reasonably sure that Islip was still acting on October 3, 1349, and quite certain that he had ceased to act by February 1351.

<sup>3</sup> Bradwardine died on August 26, and the "*congé d'élire*" was issued on September 3. It must have been speedily acted upon, for the bull of provision was issued at Avignon on October 7, apparently after knowledge of the election had reached the curia.

<sup>4</sup> For Islip's early and later career see my article in the *D.N.B.*, published in 1892. This must be used with caution, by reason of both its omissions and commissions. The former include most of his record as an administrator. As regards the latter, I should not now associate his name with the Oxfordshire but with the Northamptonshire Islip. It is doubtful whether he can be safely identified with the Simon Islip who, early in the century, was a fellow of Merton College, Oxford. No one now believes that he wrote the *Speculum regis Edwardi*.

administrative historian, save when, upon occasion, he opposed the king with an energy which showed that his former service to the state had not destroyed the independence of his outlook.<sup>1</sup> The glory of the privy seal was great when it seemed an inevitable step towards the chancellorship, and when two of its former keepers held the two archbishoprics. It is, perhaps, not too fanciful to suggest that the concession made in 1353, by which the northern primate was allowed to bear his cross erect in the southern province, was due to the good feeling existing between Islip and Thoresby, going back to the days when they were colleagues as keepers of small seals of state.

The next keeper of the privy seal was Master Michael Northburgh, a kinsman of the Roger Northburgh whom we know as the first keeper of the privy seal not also controller of the wardrobe,<sup>2</sup> and who, old and blind, remained bishop of Lichfield until he died in 1359. Michael was a master of arts and doctor of law.<sup>3</sup> He seems to have been an ecclesiastical lawyer who made his career as a king's clerk through the channel of diplomacy. Envoy at Avignon in 1345,<sup>4</sup> he was, on May 10, 1346, made a member of the king's council.<sup>5</sup> This valiant clerk took part in the whole of the Crécy campaign, which he described in two interesting letters preserved in Avesbury's chronicle.<sup>6</sup> From 1347 onwards he was constantly engaged on diplomatic work, and it may well be that this preoccupation retarded his appointment as Islip's successor, as it certainly prevented his discharging in person his duties as keeper.<sup>7</sup> Even his election to a bishopric did not stop his diplo-

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If an archbishop Simon wrote that tract, he was certainly Simon Meopham, perhaps the only archbishop of the reign who was not a king's clerk before he became a bishop.

<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, above, iii. 207-208.

<sup>2</sup> See above, ii. 286-287.

<sup>3</sup> *C. Pap. R. Let.* iii. 60. This was before 1343, when he became canon of Chichester.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* iii. 16. His biography has been written in the *D.N.B.* by Mr. C. L. Kingsford.

<sup>5</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1345-48, p. 80. His wages as counsellor were to be received from the exchequer, and amounted to 50 marks a year when in England, and 100 marks abroad, with robes of the suit of clerks of the household. He received those wages in 1348; *I.R.* 344. In 1352 his annual fee was £50 "quamdiu ipsum de consilio regis fore contigerit"; *ib.* 364/12.

<sup>6</sup> Avesbury, pp. 357-360, 367-369.

<sup>7</sup> The earliest reference I have found to Northburgh as keeper is in an issue to the keeper of the wardrobe, dated November 11, 1350: "per manus magistri



matic activities, and he retained the privy seal until the end of 1354.<sup>1</sup> He had preferments exceeding the ordinary pluralism of a favourite king's clerk, besides other exceptional sources of income, such as exchequer grants and private allowances from societies who found it worth their while to cultivate the goodwill of the king's confidant.<sup>2</sup> Elected bishop of London on April 23, 1354, he was at once confirmed and put in possession of his temporalities, though not consecrated till fifteen months later.<sup>3</sup> He died in 1361, leaving a good library of law books<sup>4</sup> and a reputation for liberality.

Northburgh's keepership is of some importance for two reasons. It shows that the keeper could be frequently absent from his charge, and also to what an extent the office of the privy seal could now function by itself in the absence of its chief. His missions abroad emphasise the fact that the keeper was already a third minister of state; the plans for the use of the seal in his absence prove that the office was now a well-staffed and organised department. Let us consider these two points in turn.

Northburgh's diplomatic functions need not be dwelt upon at length, but they are important from his constant absorption in them. Soon after his appointment, he was, on September 3, 1350, sent with others to Dunkirk to treat with count Louis of

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Michaelis de Northburgh, custodis priuati sigilli." As it includes the cost of sojourns "extra curiam," both in England and beyond sea, it throws back his appointment for a considerable time; *I.R.* 355/10.

<sup>1</sup> He was still keeper on February 19, 1354, when he received an instalment of his wages; *E.A.* 392/12. He was also described as keeper on August 26, 1354, when he was elect and confirmed bishop of London; *C.W.* 1334/7.

<sup>2</sup> See, for instance, *Lit. Cantuar.* ii. 317, where the monks of Christ Church, Canterbury, gave him, on November 3, 1353, a pension of 60s. a year "merita ejus recollentes (*sic*) sperantesque ejus consilium et auxilium in futurum." The editor's naïve suggestion that Northburgh was "adviser of the convent" vies with the monks' description of him as "doctor of laws" in suppressing the essential fact that this was a bribe given to conciliate a leading minister of the crown. A petition of the commons, granted in 1410, that chancellor, treasurer and privy seal should not receive presents, was not uncalled for; *Rot. Parl.* iii. 626.

<sup>3</sup> When bishop elect and confirmed, Northburgh was not even in minor orders, as his indult to receive "minor and major orders from any catholic bishop" shows; *C. Pap. R. Let.* iii. 522.

<sup>4</sup> These he left to his kinsman, Michael Free, sometimes called Michael Northburgh, a youth of illegitimate birth, for whose welfare and ecclesiastical preferment the bishop showed great anxiety; *C. Pap. R. Pet.* i. 220, 258, 267, 355.

Flanders.<sup>1</sup> He was still in "the parts of Calais" when he was paid some of his expenses<sup>2</sup> and joined by Tirrington, one of his clerks.<sup>3</sup> So late as December 20, one of his servants was paid for coming from Calais, bringing letters addressed by Northburgh to the council.<sup>4</sup> His sojourn abroad lasted for sixty-seven days, for which he received, in addition to his pay of twenty shillings a day, allowance for his passage to and fro, the cost of messengers sent by him to the court at Avignon, and a gratuity of a second twenty shillings a day "because of the great expenses which he had incurred."<sup>5</sup> In 1351 Northburgh stayed longer in England, receiving expenses for attending council, and going on a mission to York between May 9 and June 4.<sup>6</sup> In 1353 his time was divided between attendance on the council at London and two more journeys to Calais,<sup>7</sup> where efforts were being made, under papal mediation, to enlarge the truce with France into a permanent peace. Northburgh and his clerks seem to have been charged with the work of drafting and with the preservation of the documents drawn up.<sup>8</sup> The negotiations, however, dragged badly, and early in 1354 Northburgh had leisure to go to Cheshire, between February 20 and March 30. Thence he was again dispatched to Calais for the great business, receiving

<sup>1</sup> *Foedera*, iii. 202. He was called "secretarius noster," and was associated with Sir Robert Herle, captain of Calais, and the old privy seal clerk, Mr. John Carlton, now dean of Wells. The persistence with which Northburgh is called "secretarius" is no new thing. He is far from being the only keeper who, in official English records, is constantly called "the keeper of the privy seal and king's secretary"; *C.P.R.*, 1350-54, pp. 178, 301, 362. Bramber, the receiver of the chamber, is also called secretary, and more properly, because he kept the secret seal. See later, pp. 34, 180.

<sup>2</sup> *I.R.* 355/10 records payments of his expenses "tam extra curiam in negociis regis in partibus Anglie quam alibi in partibus transmarinis et repassagiis suis."

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* 352/12. Tirrington was "missus in negociis regis versus partes de Caleys."

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* 355/24. "Roberto Payn, valetto magistri Michaelis de Northburgh, nuper venienti de partibus de Caleys cum litteris eiusdem magistri Michaelis directis consilio domini regis."

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* 355/40. His business was "ad tractandum cum hominibus Flandrie et Ispannie."

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.* 359.

<sup>7</sup> *E.A.* 392/12, ff. 37d, 65d, etc. These journeys were between Feb. 24 and March 15, and between Oct. 27 and Dec. 14. In the whole time of the wardrobe account, Northburgh received expenses "extra curiam" both at home at 13s. 4d. and abroad at 20s. a day.

<sup>8</sup> See, for instance, *C.C.R.*, 1354-60, pp. 83-84, and *I.R.* 374/19.

expenses on the foreign scale between March 20 and April 12.<sup>1</sup> The truce was prolonged on April 6,<sup>2</sup> and the provisional results of the negotiations were submitted to the parliament of April-May, 1354, at which Northburgh was in attendance.<sup>3</sup> When the commons unanimously expressed their agreement with the project of a perpetual peace with France, Northburgh directed a notary to embody this opinion in an instrument drafted in public form.<sup>4</sup> He was at once sent back to Calais, being now bishop-elect of London, and thence went to Avignon, receiving, besides his wages, allowances for a horse to take records and other documents to the Roman court respecting the treaty with France.<sup>5</sup> But the great embassy proved fruitless. This failure to secure peace concluded Northburgh's official career, though he retained nominal control of the seal until at least August 26, 1354.<sup>6</sup>

The habitual absences of Northburgh were in nowise unprecedented. Under Edward I. Benstead had been sent on missions *extra curiam* almost as freely as Northburgh. In the initial days of Michael's kinsman, Roger Northburgh, the keeper and his clerks were almost always at London with the council, while the king lived a wandering life in the north. Such absences from court were recognised when, in Limber's time as keeper, the issue rolls recorded payments to him for the wages and expenses of himself and his clerks remaining with him outside the household.<sup>7</sup> Keeper Zouch, in 1336, was allowed wages at 20s. a day, a large sum plainly intended to cover the cost of the staff as well as that of the keeper.<sup>8</sup> The long absences of king and household abroad, during the early campaigns of the great war, retarded this tendency by compelling residence in court. But after 1346 it was exceptional for Edward III. to be abroad for long periods. Thereupon the movement out of court went

<sup>1</sup> *I.R.* 374/10. The embassy to treat for peace with France was empowered on March 30. Besides Northburgh, it included only the bishop of Norwich, the earl of Huntingdon and the captain of Calais; *Foedera*, iii. 275.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* iii. 276-277.

<sup>3</sup> See above, iii. 173.

<sup>4</sup> *Rot. Parl.* ii. 262.

<sup>5</sup> *I.R.* 374/19.

<sup>6</sup> *C.W.* 1334/7.

<sup>7</sup> *I.R.* 297/24. "Ade de Lymbergh . . . xxvii libras . . . in garderoba debitas de vadiis et expensis suis et clericorum dicti sigilli secum morantium extra curiam de tempore Ricardi de Bury." This was in 1328-29, though the wardrobe keeper's bill was drafted in 6 Edward III. and payment was only made in 1338.

<sup>8</sup> *I.R.* 290/23.



on with accelerated pace, the more easily since the office of the privy seal had already become a necessary cog in the wheel of state. That meant that the clerks of the seal no longer dwelt at court with the wardrobe staff, but formed, as we shall soon see, a self-contained *hospicium* of their own, whose normal location was in London or Westminster.

During Michael Northburgh's prolonged divorces from the seal and office, temporary arrangements had to be made to provide for its daily business and the maintenance of the staff. This was not difficult, since both the office and the *hospicium* were regularised, and the two senior clerks of the seal, John Winwick and Henry Ingelby, were men of experience, intelligence and character, perfectly able to take upon themselves the burden of the administration of the department. At first, almost automatically and naturally, the subordinates occupied the place of their absent chief. Thus, on May 11, 1351, the exchequer issued, directly to Winwick and Ingelby, sums of £46 : 13 : 4 and £20 respectively, in "aid of the expenses which they had sustained at their own cost, in abiding at the king's court with the privy seal, when its keeper was away on the king's business."<sup>1</sup> As the period of Northburgh's absence was, as we have seen, sixty-seven days, this amounts, within 6s. 8d., to the normal twenty shillings a day which the keeper received for the expenses of the seal. It showed some enterprise to incur an expense which, in the fourteenth century, was a very large one, and the fact that the king reimbursed them is creditable to him or to his exchequer. Winwick had his reward when, on the occasion of Northburgh's visit to York in the same year, he was allowed the official twenty shillings a day for keeping "master Michael's household" between May 9 and June 4.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *I.R.* 358/4. "Johanni de Wynwyke et Henrico de Ingelby, clericis de priuato sigillo, in denariis eis liberatis in auxilium expensarum suarum que idem Johannes et Henricus penes regem cum priuato sigillo pro diuersis vicibus, custodis eiusdem priuati sigilli alibi in obsequio regis existentis, ad sumptus proprias morantes sustinuerunt, videlicet eidem Johanni xlvi. xiijs. iiij*d* et prefato Henrico xx*li*." It is unfortunate that the date of the keeper's absence is not specified in the writ. In the instance immediately following nearly six months elapsed between the absence and the payment, so we may safely place the absence some months earlier in the first instance.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* 359. "Johanni de Wynwyk, clerico de priuato sigillo, moranti apud Londonias in absentia magistri Michaelis de Northburgh, custodis eiusdem sigilli, tenendo hospicium dicti magistri Michaelis tempore quo missus fuerat

Similarly, in 1354, he received the same daily sum for the period between February 20 and March 3, during which Northburgh was absent "in the parts of Chester," and again for twenty-four days when the keeper was at Calais, between March 20 and April 13.<sup>1</sup> The amount paid to the keeper when he was running the *hospicium* in person was thus bestowed upon his substitutes while he was away. Some restraint, however, came to be imposed upon their freedom of action.

When, in August 1354, Northburgh went on his final mission to Avignon, further precautions were taken for the custody of the privy seal. These are described in detail in a signet letter, addressed to Thoresby, now archbishop of York, but still chancellor.<sup>2</sup> As usual, the deputy keepership was given to Winwick and Ingelby, or to one of them, but with discretionary power severely fettered. Northburgh surrendered his seal to the chancellor, who was to place it in a bag, seal the bag with his seal, and deliver the sealed bag to the nominal keeper of the seal. When the seal was required, the bag was to be opened by the appointed deputy in the chancellor's presence, the seal abstracted and used and then sealed up again at once afterwards. Both chancellor and deputy keeper were charged that nothing involving expense was to be sealed without the king having been previously informed. This was, in effect, the inverse method to that so often adopted when the great seal was taken abroad. But the privy seal was even

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in nuncium regis versus partes Eboraci." This sum was paid on Dec. 2, 1351. It may be significant that, at the time Winwick thus took charge, the writ was issued authorising reimbursement of the expenses incurred by Ingelby and Winwick on the occasion of the absence of the keeper referred to in n. 1 above. Was a definite promise of payment needed to make Winwick take up this second responsibility?

<sup>1</sup> *I.R.* 374/10 (first entry under 16 June).

<sup>2</sup> *C.W.* 1334/7 is worth quoting in full. "Depar le roi. Tres reverent piere en Dieu. Come par noz autres lettres eons mande a nostre cher clerc mestre Michel de Northburgh, eslyt de Londres confermez, gardein de nostre priue seal, qe pour cause qil est ore prochainement a aler en nostre message vers les parties de dela, qil face liuerer a vous meismes mesme le seal a demurer desouz vostre seal en la garde de nos chers clercs Johan de Wynewyke et Henri de Ingelby, ou de lun de eux, si volons qe, receuz du dit eslyt nostre dit seal et ent faite la liueree pur demurer en garde, come desus est dit, il soit ouert de temps en temps, en la presence de vous meismes, pur deliuerer les choses ad toutes les foitz qe busoign serra, sibien celles qe nous touchent come les autres touchanz la deliuerance de nostre poeple, issint toutesfoitz qe rienz ny soit fait parentre vous et eux qe soit chargeant, sanz nous premerement ent auiser. Donne souz nostre signet a nostre manoir de Clipstone en Shirwode, le xxvi jour daugust" (1354).



more completely under the chancellor's control than the great seal beyond sea had been under the control of the keeper of the privy seal. Thoresby, years before the keeper of the privy seal in charge of the great seal, was now by this strange turn become the keeper of the great seal in charge of the privy seal. It was another approach towards the treatment of the two seals as part of a common centralised secretariat. Here again the office clearly counted for more than the keeper. There was some ingenuity in making the chancellor the custodian of the seal which was normally used as a check upon his action. In a way it seems as though Baldock's policy were coming back by the accidents of the situation.

We learn that Henry Ingelby kept the *hospicium priuati sigilli* immediately after this, from August 29 to September 21, but that he only received 13s. 4d., instead of the customary 20s. a day for the expenses of the household.<sup>1</sup> One would naturally infer that he, rather than Winwick, was selected to keep the privy seal under Thoresby's direction: but perhaps the inference is unsound. However that may be, the system set up by the signet letter soon came to an end. By November 27, 1354, we know that the privy seal had been transferred to the custody of Thomas Bramber,<sup>2</sup> and we need have little hesitation in putting back the beginning of his keepership to near that St. Matthew's day when Ingelby ceased to hold the *hospicium*. It is worth remembering also that it was no longer the *hospicium* of Master Michael, but the *hospicium* of the privy seal. After 1360 such payments to clerks keeping the *hospicium* cease to be recorded. The grants to the keeper were simply for his wages, or, sometimes,

<sup>1</sup> *I.R.* 375/20, "Henrico de Ingelby, tenenti hospicium priuati sigilli a xxix<sup>o</sup> die Augusti usque festum sancti Mathei per xxix dies in denariis sibi liberatis pro expensis eiusdem hospicii, capienti per diem xiiis. iiid., xiiiiis." This entry is obviously incorrect somewhere, for there are 24, not 29, days between Aug. 29 and Sept. 21, and the total of £14 is too small a sum for 24 days even at 13s. 4d. a day, but it is not easy to suggest wherein the error lies. The payment was made on Dec. 19, when Bramber was already keeper. Perhaps Ingelby was several times chosen to keep the household of the privy seal. Between 1350 and 1371 he was keeper of the *domus conuersorum*, whose premises enabled him easily to lodge the clerks of the seal. See also above, iii. 214, and for his business relations later, p. 99. After his resignation in 1371, the keepership went to the chancery clerks, and the house became the *hospicium* of the rolls' office of chancery.

<sup>2</sup> *Foedera*, iii. 344.

for his wages and those of the clerks serving under him. The disposition of them was no longer a concern of the exchequer. The *hospicium* was sufficiently regularised to function independently, and it was the keeper's business, not the king's, to provide for its custody when he was unable to superintend it in person. But we must reserve for later discussion the exact nature and attributes of the *hospicium privati sigilli*.

We must now return to the succession of the keepers of the privy seal, resuming at the moment when Northburgh gave place to Thomas Bramber, known to us already as clerk and receiver of the king's chamber.<sup>1</sup> The keepership of the secret seal was, as we have seen, an incident of the receivership of the chamber, so that Bramber already had experience which would make it easy for him to deal with the privy seal. But he held the privy seal only for about a year. We know that he was still in office on October 7, 1355, when he received *vadia guerre* on the expectation that he and his warrior *comitina* would follow Edward III. to Calais.<sup>2</sup> But that expedition never materialised, and it was his successor who, with his men, followed the king on a winter journey to Scotland.<sup>3</sup> Already, on November 27, that successor, John Winwick, was in office. We have little information as to the part Bramber played in the development of his department, but it is unlikely that he made much impression. He was the only keeper since Kilsby who did not attain episcopal rank. For this his trouble with the pope, and his early death, may well account.<sup>4</sup> His appointment has interest as a rather belated reversion to the chamber clerk type of keeper, especially as the precedent thus set was soon followed in favour of a more distinguished personality than Bramber.

It is difficult not to connect the changes we are now recording with other and more important administrative movements which

<sup>1</sup> See above, iii. 219, iv. 258-259, 262-263, 285. He delivered a chamber account in October 1352 (*C.P.R.*, 1350-54, p. 355).

<sup>2</sup> *I.R.* 377/87 shows him as keeper receiving a prest on Sept. 26, and *ib.* 379/2 as receiving on Oct. 7 *vadia guerre* "versus partes transmarinas."

<sup>3</sup> Winwick, on Nov. 27, 1356, was present as keeper at Westminster when the great seal was transferred from archbishop Thoresby to Edington, bishop of Winchester; *Foedera*, iii. 344. Compare *I.R.* 379/17, which shows Winwick as keeper receiving *vadia guerre* "versus partes Scocie" on Dec. 9.

<sup>4</sup> For Bramber's short subsequent career and his trouble with the pope in 1357, see above, iii. 210, 237. He was dead before Oct. 24, 1361.

were taking place in the same year, 1356. Among these were the fundamental readjustments of office involved in the abolition of the chamber lands,<sup>1</sup> and the transference of the great seal from Thoresby to Edington, one of the first acts witnessed by Winwick in his official capacity of keeper. Again we may suspect, though we shall never be able to know, that the guiding hand of the new chancellor directed all these developments towards a single end. Winwick's own appointment, which we are fortunate in being able to date so precisely, is in itself another incident of all these shiftings of place, while the succession as treasurer of a person so insignificant as John Sheppey, bishop of Rochester,<sup>2</sup> suggests that quieter times were expected in the exchequer than under the reforming and masterful Edington. Stability was now more important than innovation, for the great war had been renewed in earnest in 1355 and was the main business of the next five years.

Both in the conduct of the war and in the development of his office, Winwick's keepership was epoch-making. His career is typical, and it is a misfortune that he has not yet found an adequate biographer. He belonged to that smaller landed class which produced so large a proportion of mediaeval officials. A Lancashire squire's son, he took his name from the parish of Winwick, near Warrington, though his father, William Winwick, lived, and owned property, at Huyton, near Liverpool, where he was buried with his wife and several kinsfolk.<sup>3</sup> John became a king's clerk, and by 1339 had already served the king long enough for his merits to induce the king to restore to his father, William Winwick, the chattels which he had forfeited for failing to appear before the king's bench to answer to a charge of homicide of which he had been acquitted.<sup>4</sup> His ability first became conspicuous during the king's Netherlandish campaigns of 1338-41,<sup>5</sup> and in the 1343 campaign in Brittany. He was then one of the four clerks of the privy seal, and he remained for the rest of his life

<sup>1</sup> See above, iv. 303-305, especially the remarks on Edington's relation to these changes.

<sup>2</sup> Sheppey became treasurer on Nov. 28, 1356, the day after Edington was made chancellor; *C.P.R.*, 1354-58, p. 479.

<sup>3</sup> *C. Pap. R. Pet.* i. 355-356. This information is given in John Winwick's petition to the pope, dated 1360, for the confirmation of his foundation of a chantry in Huyton Church in memory of his father, mother and other relatives there buried in St. Michael's chapel.

<sup>4</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1338-40, pp. 215-216. See above, iii. 85.

<sup>5</sup> *I.R.* 331.



attached to that office. He had the usual reward in livings, prebends, pensions and grants, the most important of his preferments being the treasurership of York, so often occupied by administrators, and the rich rectory of Wigan in his native county.<sup>1</sup> He was active in financial operations, both on his own account and on the king's, farming on a large scale the revenues of rich Lancashire landlords, such as the Butlers of Warrington and the Hoghtons of Hoghton. Altogether he was a most prosperous and successful official. We have seen how often he had been put in charge of the office in the absence of the keeper, his only rival for such duty being Ingelby. It needed but a small step to raise him to the headship. Yet it was the first occasion, in forty-five years of its history, that a clerk of the privy seal had been appointed to its keepership.

There was little in the first four years of Winwick's keepership that is specially worth recording here. His importance began in the autumn of 1359, when he went overseas with the king, accompanied by his four clerks, and attended his master at every stage of his last great campaign, until his return in May 1360. We have seen already that for the whole of this period Winwick was keeper of both great and privy seal, that he was attended by clerks of chancery as well as clerks of privy seal, that he, helped by his notaries, was the foremost in conducting negotiations and in drafting treaties, and that the treaty of Brétigni was so largely his work that the French officially described him as king's chancellor in their draft of the treaty.<sup>2</sup> We have seen also that much of the advantage won in his presence at Brétigni was lost by the negotiators of Calais. But the treaty marked the end of Winwick's career. He returned with the king in May, and on the last day of that month withdrew from the court for good, though he continued to receive wages until July 12, the date, no doubt, of his death.

Like so many other officials of the period, Winwick had a magnanimous side to his character, which showed itself not only

<sup>1</sup> The restoration of his father's chattels was "in consideration of good service long rendered by John de Wynquik, son of the said William"; "especially since he came to parts beyond the seas"; *ib.* p. 216. *C.C.R.*, 1341-43, pp. 84, 200, 300, shows that he was abroad under both Norwell and Cusance, keepers of the wardrobe.

<sup>2</sup> See above, iii. 222-223, 225-227.



in the family chantry,<sup>1</sup> a memorial so usual as almost to escape notice, but in a grander scheme for the establishment of a college at Oxford. "Desiring to enrich the English church with men of letters," he aspired to found a college of scholars who should study canon and civil law, and lecture on these subjects, a certain portion of them being ordained priests.<sup>2</sup> But the scheme came to nothing, though receiving royal and papal approval. The cause of the breakdown is said to have been the greediness of his heirs.

Winwick's place was at once taken by John Buckingham, whom we know already, first as keeper of the great wardrobe and then as successively controller and keeper of the wardrobe of the household.<sup>3</sup> It was now clearer than ever that the privy seal was not only a post of higher dignity than any household office, but even more, for Buckingham had quitted the wardrobe to be a baron of the exchequer, and was for the first time brought into relation with the privy seal by being appointed to keep the privy seal of Thomas of Woodstock, the nominal regent of England while his father and elder brothers were fighting the French beyond seas. Thus the home government, like the administration following the king, was exactly constituted on the lines of the precedent of 1346-47, when Simon Islip kept the seal of the regent Lionel of Antwerp.<sup>4</sup> We have seen how Buckingham administered this office; how, unlike Islip, who had the full twenty shillings, he had to be content with 13s. 4d. a day; how, the wardrobe being beyond sea, he had to take these wages directly from the exchequer, and how he was more formally a minister of state than even Islip had been.<sup>5</sup> Part of the conscious effort to make each branch of the dual ministry as self-sufficing as possible was that Buckingham had by his side John Welwick, B.C.L., the king's notary,<sup>6</sup> one of the most senior and distinguished clerks of the privy seal, and kinsman of William Tirrington,<sup>7</sup> as well as a humbler assistant in John Bamburgh,

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 35, n. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *C. Pap. R. Pet.* i. 101.

<sup>3</sup> See above, iv. 381, n. 4, where his appointments are summarised and references given to the places where they are treated; notably above, iii. 218, and iv. 133-135.

<sup>4</sup> See above, iii. 165-166.

<sup>5</sup> See above, iii. 222-223.

<sup>6</sup> *C. Pap. R. Pet.* i. 120, 254, 258, 260, 281, 288.

<sup>7</sup> *Ib.* p. 259.

who seems not to have been one of the king's privy seal clerks, but to have been called in, possibly in extreme age and infirmity, to help staff the temporary office of the regent's privy seal.<sup>1</sup> To make the precedent of 1346-47 more complete, when Winwick came home to die after the treaty of Brétigni, Buckingham stepped into his place, just as Islip was transferred from the custody of the regent's seal to the custody of the king's privy seal, when Thoresby was raised to the chancery. Indeed, with Islip and Thoresby still holding the two archbishoprics, it was not a precedent likely to be forgotten.<sup>2</sup>

Buckingham was appointed to keep the regent's seal on October 11, but his wages only ran from October 28, 1359, the day Edward left England, to May 18, 1360, the day of the king's return.<sup>3</sup> There was, apparently, a short gap before he was transferred to the king's seal, but he was needed at Calais for the final treaty of peace, and received special allowance for his passage, stay, return and repassage for his men and horses.<sup>4</sup> Like Islip, he was supposed to draw his wages as keeper from the wardrobe, and the venerable pretence was continued of crediting the keeper of the wardrobe with the sums issued to Buckingham from the exchequer, recording that the wardrobe received them "through his hands." This went on until November 18, 1360.<sup>5</sup> After

<sup>1</sup> *I.R.* 403/41, a payment to John Bamburgh, clerk, lately assigned to attend the privy seal of the keeper of England, for his "rewardum" and for wax, parchment and other necessities for the office of the said seal. Cf. *Exch. of Rec.*, *War. for I.*, 6/41, the privy seal order for this payment. Was he the John Bamburgh who, in 1358, was granted £5 a year towards his sustenance because "he has become so feeble that he can labour no longer" and had long rendered good service to the king and queen Philippa? The identification is doubtful. In 1362, John Bamburgh was important enough to be a witness to the treaty of Castile, which Tirrington had reduced to public form; *Foedera*, iii. 657.

<sup>2</sup> *I.R.* 407/24. See above, iii. 223.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* 407/25. There are 204 days between these dates, but Buckingham only received wages for 104 days.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* 407/26, "Johanni de Bukyngham, custodi priuati sigilli regis, in denariis sibi liberatis per manus Johannis de Maydenbury, tam pro expensis suis eundo versus Caley pro tractatu pacis inter dominum regem et Johannem, regem Francie, et ibidem morando et redeundo, quam pro passagio et repassagio hominum et equorum suorum." Maidenbury was serving as his personal clerk when he kept the regent's seal.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* 402/5. My statement in iii. 238, n. 3, that Wykeham in 1365 was the first keeper to receive wages direct from the exchequer is therefore erroneous. While the overlap between the two wardrobes of Farley and Ferriby lasted, Farley was credited with his wages; see above, iv. 146-147. After Farley ceased, Buckingham's payments came from the exchequer, except for debts to

that date, however, the exchequer recorded the disbursement of Buckingham's wages in his own name, without the wardrobe as intermediary, and that method was adhered to for the future. It was only a matter of form, yet in an age when forms counted for a good deal it was a step further towards freeing the privy seal from its dependence on the wardrobe, to allow its keeper and clerks to take their pay directly from the exchequer. With the disappearance of the item of wages of the privy seal staff from the wardrobe accounts, almost the last link binding the privy seal to the household seemed broken. The change gives the administrative historian the advantage of being able to ascertain from the issue rolls the dates of service and the emoluments of the keeper of the privy seal and his clerks. Buckingham received wages for himself and his clerks until June 9, 1363.<sup>1</sup> On the previous January 25, he had been consecrated bishop of Lincoln.<sup>2</sup> He held that see until 1397, when, resisting a forcible translation, he retired to a monastery and died the next year.

On June 10, 1363, William Wykeham replaced Buckingham as keeper of the privy seal, and retained the office until October 27, 1367.<sup>3</sup> There is no need to describe with much detail his acts as keeper. It would, indeed, be impossible to do so, since at no time was his sole, or even main, function the keeping of the privy seal, and for more than the last month of office he duplicated the post with that of chancellor. He was, for all practical purposes, the chief minister and confidential adviser of the king. As such, his departmental activities in the privy seal office were naturally less important than if he had been occupied only in keeping the seal. Though his imposing position enhanced the glory of the privy seal, it did nothing to strengthen it as a separate branch of the administration. To some extent it involved reaction, for the great fact about Wykeham was that for all this period he remained a member of the inner circle of the royal household, which suggested a revival of the curialistic control of Kilsby's keepership. But Wykeham, though

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the wardrobe; *I.R.* 411/6. We have also on record the payments to the keepers of the regent's seal from the exchequer, when the wardrobe was abroad with the king.

<sup>1</sup> *I.R.* 415.

<sup>2</sup> For the difficulties attending his promotion, see above, iii. 254-255.

<sup>3</sup> These are the extreme dates between which Wykeham received his 20s. a day as pay.



distrusted and unpopular as a greedy upstart and a creature of court favour, was no Kilsby. He was a conservative-minded administrator, whose outlook rapidly changed with prosperity and power. His importance is general, not departmental. We have already said all that we have to say about his general policy during these years,<sup>1</sup> so that there remains only the simpler task of examining the ways in which this general policy affected, directly and indirectly, the history of the privy seal.

As clerk of the king's chamber and keeper of his secret seal, Wykeham had, since 1361, been constantly resident at court and had become the king's confidential adviser before he took charge of the privy seal. While recent keepers had generally lived "out of court," and had become more and more departmental ministers, Wykeham continued for the whole of his keepership the mode of life which he had already adopted, and combined with his new office the numerous posts previously given to him. So inconsiderable an element was the privy seal among these, that Wykeham received no wages in respect to it for his first two years as keeper. At last, on March 14, 1365, his finances were regularised by a curiously phrased writ ordering the exchequer to pay him 20s. a day, the customary wages of the keeper of the privy seal, "notwithstanding the fact that he continues to be of the inner household of the king, because, besides the office of the privy seal, he has endured and will have to endure daily excessive labours and charges as regards divers offices connected with the king's private affairs with which he has specially charged him."<sup>2</sup> This emphasises Wykeham's exceptional position. Normally the 20s. a day was supposed to be paid only when the keeper and his clerks were *extra curiam*, though, as a matter of fact, it had in recent years been paid without much regard to the place of the keeper's residence. If not wages, the payments were a supplementary contribution analogous to the chancellor's fee. Even now the grant was only for such time as Wykeham continued to hold his other offices in addition to his keepership of the seal, although actually he drew his 20s. a day for the whole

<sup>1</sup> See above, iii. 235-239.

<sup>2</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1364-67, p. 97. This writ is later described as "breue regis currens de magno sigillo"; *I.R.* 430/11. The word *vadia* was avoided; the 20s. a day were "pro laboribus et sumptibus excessivis" of William.



period of his keepership.<sup>1</sup> Originally a concession to Wykeham's particular circumstances, this method of paying the keeper of the privy seal was adopted in future as the normal one.

Wykeham's anomalous keepership was something unique, suggestive of his being confidential first minister by royal favour and influence rather than by reason of the combination of offices held by him. Ten years later, when Wykeham had fallen into such difficulties that he had to receive a patent of pardon from Richard II. in 1377, the writ of the young king, issued with the advice of his first parliament, describes him as "clerk of the privy seal, chief of the secret council and governor of the great council,"<sup>2</sup> and implies that Simon Langham, the chancellor, and John Barnet, the treasurer, were but tools in the hands of this power behind the throne, in whom his sovereign placed unlimited confidence. The details of his action during these years belong,

<sup>1</sup> The issue rolls record meticulously the dates of the payments made to Wykeham and the periods which they covered. The first payment was made on March 2, 1365, for, according to the issue roll, the period between July 11, 1363, and February 28, 1365; but the roll calculates that there were 628 days between these dates, and records that Wykeham was paid £628. The actual number of days between those dates is 598, however. The explanation seems to be that the first date, July 11, was a slip, for the writ of March 14, 1365, ordered payment from June 10, 1363. As the payment is recorded under March 2, there was presumably a previous writ to the same effect. The words of the entry are "Willelmo de Wykeham, custodi priuati sigilli regis, et preter officium illud attendenti circa diversa officia tangentia priuata negocia domini regis de quibus dominus rex ipsum specialiter onerauit, cui dominus rex xx solidos diurnos ad scaccarium pro laboribus et sumptibus excessiuis quos idem Willelmus in dictis officiis sustinuit et in dies sustinere oportebit per litteras suas patentes nuper concessit, eo non obstante quod idem Willelmus de intrinseca familia regis moratur"; *I.R.* 421. Another payment soon followed, on July 25, for the period of 140 days between March 1 and July 18, 1365; *ib.* 423. Here the arithmetic is right! Later payments were on July 26, 1366, *ib.* 427/25; on October 24, 1366, between March 10 and 14, *ib.* 430/11. The last payment was "venerabili patri Willelmo, episcopo Wintoniensi, nuper custodi priuati sigilli domini regis, in denariis sibi liberatis," etc.; £299 from January 1 to October 27, 1367, "quo quidem die Petrus de Lacy recepit officium supradictum"; *ib.* 433/13. The phrasing of the writs varies to some extent. Thus, that on July 28, 1366, quotes the wording of the patent of appointment on March 14, 1363, which is described as "breue currens de magno sigillo." Once the payment was made "quandiu officia et onera subierit predicta"; *ib.* 427/25. Sometimes the last words ran "eo non obstante quod idem Willelmus de intrinseca familia regis morari diuersis temporibus contigerit"; *ib.* 427/25, 430/11.

<sup>2</sup> *Rot. Parl.* iii. 388. "Predictus episcopus, existens clericus priuati sigilli et capitalis secreti consilii ac gubernator magni consilii." The language of the long writ (*ib.* pp. 388-390) is doubtless exaggerated and used with a purpose, but it is unintelligible if Wykeham had not been generally suspected of working behind the throne with almost unlimited authority.

as we have seen, to general history rather than to the departmental history of the privy seal. The instructive thing to remember is that most of the violent acts which brought about Wykeham's fall were done, not when he was chancellor, but when, ostensibly at least, his chief office was that of keeper of the privy seal.

We are already aware of the enormous rewards which Wykeham received from a grateful master in the way of ecclesiastical preferment. Yet Edward had such difficulties in establishing him as bishop of Winchester that more than a year elapsed between his election and his consecration. For the whole of this time he kept his curious combination of political and household offices. Made chancellor on September 17, 1367, consecrated bishop on October 10, he vacated the privy seal only on October 27. He maintained in the higher office the extensive authority which he had so long enjoyed. There was no opportunity, in these circumstances, for his successor to the privy seal to attain Wykeham's eminence. The mediocrity of the fortunes of the privy seal for the rest of Edward III.'s reign shows to what a limited extent Wykeham had influenced the future of the office. Just as Kilsby failed to make the privy seal the permanent control of the chancery and treasury, so did Wykeham, elevated to the chancery, stop any tendency to make it the concealed chief ministry of the crown. Despite all temporary deflections, the privy seal pursued its inevitable course towards becoming a ministry of state.

On October 27, 1367, Peter Lacy became keeper of the privy seal. He was an elderly man, long a clerk in the household of the prince of Wales, and for the last twenty years the prince's general receiver in England.<sup>1</sup> As the financial head of the prince's household, he was, during his master's long absences abroad, the administrator of his finances and his natural attorney and representative.<sup>2</sup> After the fashion of the time, Lacy was a king's clerk as well as the prince's clerk, and all through his career divided his service between his two masters.<sup>3</sup> Accordingly,

<sup>1</sup> "Receptor principis in Anglia"; *Foedera* iii. 839. For details of his service to the prince, see below, pp. 327-331.

<sup>2</sup> See, for instance, *C.C.R.*, 1349-54, p. 240.

<sup>3</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1350-54, p. 442, shows him described as king's clerk as early as 1353.

he remained the prince's receiver throughout the four years for which he kept the king's privy seal.<sup>1</sup> His twofold allegiance is the more interesting since the absence of the Black Prince in his principality of Aquitaine lasted the whole of Lacy's keepership, and must, we imagine, have imposed upon Lacy special obligations. His tenure of the privy seal was not, apparently, eventful, and the reduction of the keeper's allowance to 13s. 4d. a day shows that the exchequer secured a slight economy by his appointment.<sup>2</sup> This sum was paid reasonably regularly, with the limitation, henceforth usual, that in the event of arrangements being made for the continuous stay of the keeper and clerks in the household, the payment should cease. As no such arrangements ever materialised, the formula, though long retained, was meaningless, the wages being paid invariably. So slow was the official mind to appreciate that in fact, if not in name, the privy seal was now permanently *extra curiam*.<sup>3</sup>

Yet it was recognised that the privy seal was a seal of state. When, for example, on the renewal of the French war in 1369, the king desired once more to be described on his seals as king of France as well as king of England, the old seals with the double title were surrendered by the exchequer to the chancellor, William Wykeham, who, retaining the great seal himself, gave the seals of the two benches and the exchequer seal to their respective custodians and the privy seal to keeper Peter Lacy.<sup>4</sup> Thus was the fiction maintained of the chancellor's control over all state seals.

Lacy's modest ecclesiastical preferment stands in glaring

<sup>1</sup> See for instances in both 1368 and 1369, Devon, *Issue Rolls, Henry III. to Henry VI.* p. 192.

<sup>2</sup> See, for instance, *I.R.* 436/21, recording a payment on December 9, 1368, "Petro de Lacy, clerico, custodi priuati sigilli regis, cui dominus rex liberari mandauit xiijs. et iiijd. per diem pro expensis suis et clericorum suorum sub ipso deseruencium in officio supradicto, quousque de continua mora per ipsum custodem in hospicio regis facienda fuerit ordinata."

<sup>3</sup> As late as 1377, Nicholas Carew was mentioned with "others of the household" as "de familia regis"; *Foedera*, iii. 1069. But as the treasurer was similarly described, the point cannot be stressed. In a vague way, all the king's ministers might be regarded as "of his household."

<sup>4</sup> *Foedera*, iii. 869. This was on June 11, 1369, and the result of a resolution of parliament a few days earlier. The control of the chancellor over the privy seal is perhaps something of a novelty. Such comprehensive control is directly contrary to Fleta's doctrine of the independence of the chancellor, even under Edward I.



contrast to the unbounded pluralism of his predecessor. Up to 1349 he held only a single parish church, probably Northfleet in Kent, which he retained until his death, but in 1349 a prebend at Chichester was allowed him by the pope.<sup>1</sup> He later combined Northfleet rectory with two prebends, but was compelled by the pope to resign the latter as the condition of his being allowed a canonry at Lichfield.<sup>2</sup> While he was in residence at his Kentish rectory, it was sometimes necessary for batches of letters of privy seal to be taken to him there that he might affix the seal to them.<sup>3</sup>

Lacy lost the privy seal as a result of the anti-clerical action of the parliament of 1371, which, as we know,<sup>4</sup> petitioned for certain offices of state to be held only by laymen justiciable in the king's court. Thereupon Wykeham and Brantingham yielded up the chancery and treasury to laymen, and Lacy, not long after, resigned the privy seal.<sup>5</sup> He retired to Northfleet, where he died in 1375, and was there commemorated by a fine brass, still fortunately surviving.<sup>6</sup>

In agreement with the wishes of parliament, Lacy's successor was a layman, the first layman who had ever kept the privy seal. This contradiction in terms, the lay clerk of the privy seal, was Nicholas Carew. He was not a man of great mark. Though holding office for six years, until the death of Edward III., he never so much as attained the rank of knighthood. His name suggests a West Country or West Welsh origin, but his local attachments were all in Surrey, where he acquired, through his

<sup>1</sup> *C. Pap. R. Pet.* i. 155. There is a curious later memorandum in the close roll, printed in *Foedera*, iii. 912, showing that Wykeham "nuper cancellarius" surrendered on March 28, 1371, not only two great seals, as was natural, but also "duo priuata sigilla quibus idem rex nuper utebatur," which had till then remained in his custody during the king's commission. One was "secretum Edwardi regis Francie et Anglie et domini Hibernie," and the other "secretum Edwardi regis Anglie domini Hibernie et Aquitanie"; see also below, p. 139, n. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *C. Pap. R. Pet.* i. 454. This was the result of a petition, on the roll of the prince of Wales, addressed to Urban V. His epitaph shows he died possessing also the prebend of Swords, in the church of Dublin; see below, n. 6.

<sup>3</sup> *I.R.* 439/35 witnesses to official business transacted in Northfleet rectory in the payment recorded on March 29, 1370, to "Johanni de March, valetto, misso versus le Northflete Petro de Lacy, custodi de priuato sigillo domini regis, cum diuersis litteris eodem sigillo sigillandis."

<sup>4</sup> See above, iii. 266-267.

<sup>5</sup> See above, iii. 267, n. 4.

<sup>6</sup> The inscription is "Hic jacet dominus Petrus de Lacy, quondam rector huius ecclesie, prebendarius de Swerdes, cathedral(is) Dublin(ensis), qui obiit xvij<sup>o</sup> die Octobr., anno domini m.cclxxv. Uia uite mors."



marriage with Lucy Willoughby, two manors in the parish of Beddington, near Croydon, one coming by inheritance from his wife's father, and the other by purchase from his wife's first husband. Thus established as a Surrey squire, he was county member in the parliament of 1360,<sup>1</sup> and was the ancestor of the Carews still represented in the female line by the owners of Beddington Park.<sup>2</sup> The old rate of 20s. a day for the expenses of the keeper and his clerks, until order was taken for their continual establishment in the household, was now substituted for the daily 13s. 4d. thought sufficient for Lacy. Carew first received wages, £40,<sup>3</sup> on August 19, 1371, which, at the normal rate, implies little more than a month's tenure of office. As salaries were generally in arrears, it is not unlikely that he had held office since the events of March. He was paid wages until June 24, 1377, three days after Edward's death, being apparently too pliant or insignificant to be displaced either by the Good Parliament or by the Lancastrian triumph following upon its collapse. As one of the executors of Edward III.'s will,<sup>4</sup> he was much occupied in carrying out its provisions during the next few years, though he was again knight of the shire for Surrey in the first parliament of Richard II., which met on October 13, 1377.<sup>5</sup> In company with other confidants of the late king, he was appealed to by Alice Perrers as having certain knowledge of the untruth of the charges brought against her.<sup>6</sup> He drew up his own will in 1387, by which he left considerable legacies to the church of Beddington and for other religious purposes. In 1391 he died, and was buried in Beddington church. The experiment of a lay keeper was not repeated.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Return of Members of Parliament*, i. 165.

<sup>2</sup> Brayley and Britton, *History of Surrey*, iv. 52-53, 62. The tomb of his son, the Nicholas Carew the younger of the early patent rolls of Richard II., is figured in *ib.* 62, from the brass in Beddington Church. He died in 1432 "senex et plenus dierum."

<sup>3</sup> *I.R.* 442/18; cf. 451/5.

<sup>4</sup> Nichols' *Royal Wills*, p. 63. One of his brother-executors was bishop Buckingham of Lincoln, his predecessor as keeper.

<sup>5</sup> *Return of Members of Parliament*, i. 199. There is a note that he was "loco militis." His son also represented Surrey in various parliaments between 1394 and 1417.

<sup>6</sup> *Rot. Parl.* iii. 13. Her appeal to Carew has a special point when we realise that he was himself in that parliament. It did not prevent her condemnation.

<sup>7</sup> There was some convenience in the lay keeper. See, for instance, the curious letter written by Carew to the chancellor, ending "sachaunt, sire, qe

The insignificance of the two last keepers of Edward III.'s privy seal is further proof of how little Wykeham's special position had affected the office. But in the new reign it was thought worth while to secure for the privy seal a man of higher official status. He was John Fordham, who, though unimportant as a king's clerk, had become prominent as "secretary" of the Black Prince since 1375 at least. He was also one of his executors,<sup>1</sup> and had been transferred to the important position of general receiver and keeper of the privy seal in the shortlived household of Richard of Bordeaux as prince of Wales.<sup>2</sup> On June 26, 1377,<sup>3</sup> he was made keeper of the privy seal of the young king, and retained this post until December 12, 1381, the eve of his consecration to the bishopric of Durham.<sup>4</sup>

Perhaps it is an indication of some decreasing importance of the keeper of the privy seal as a minister, that Fordham's name, like the names of his two immediate predecessors, occurs seldom in the records and chronicles. Further, when the first parliament of Richard II. petitioned that, during the minority, the chief officers of the crown should be nominated in parliament, the magnates controlling the council allowed this for chancellor and treasurer, steward and chamberlain, but put the keeper of the privy seal into a secondary category of posts reserved by the king for "his personal choice."<sup>5</sup> Subsequently, as we have seen,

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nul des clers du priue seal voille escrire de ceste matere pur dute de irregularite." This is printed in Maxwell-Lyte, pp. 58-59, and seems to have concerned a matter in which it was uncanonical for clerks to act. Sir Henry suggests that his "assistants" were in "holy orders," though clerkship, of course, did not imply any "orders" at all. A similar trouble was avoided in the chancery of Aragon, where the chancellor was nearly always a bishop, by the appointment of a vice-chancellor, "vir fidelis et sapiens et in iure civili peritus post cancellarium proponatur vinculo alicuius sacri ordinis minime alligatus; ut, si forte quid per cancellarium in criminalibus fieri non poterit, per istum suppleatur"; Finke, *Acta Aragonensia*, i. xlv.

<sup>1</sup> For Fordham's earlier career, see above, iii. 330; *C.W.* 1339/13, makes Richard speak of him as one "qui nobis et genitori nostro celeberrime memorie per magna tempora deseruit." Compare *C.P.R.*, 1381-85, p. 362. He is called king's clerk in 1374; *ib.*, 1374-77, p. 76. For his benefices in 1374, see *C. Pap. R. Let.* iv. 189.

<sup>2</sup> See above, iv. 189-191, where a summary of his account is given.

<sup>3</sup> See above, iii. 330.

<sup>4</sup> This took place on January 5, 1382. He was appointed by provision on September 9, 1381, and received his temporalities on October 23. For his later history, see above, iii. 436.

<sup>5</sup> See above, iii. 335-336.

this position was modified, all the early parliaments of Richard II. recognising the privy seal as one of the five principal offices of the crown. In the worst days of the continual council, all five were free to transact the routine business of their office, independently of the control of the special council of regency. Fordham was peculiarly devoted to his young master. He sent his clerk to Avignon to inform the pope of his coronation,<sup>1</sup> and he stood by him in the Tower in the earlier stages of the Peasants' Revolt.<sup>2</sup> He suffered for his loyalty, incurring such unpopularity with the London mob that it raided his house in the Strand, though the only harm it did was in stealing his wine.<sup>3</sup>

Fordham's successor at the privy seal was William Dighton, who took up office on December 13, 1381.<sup>4</sup> His career is a replica of that of John Winwick, though he showed little of his predecessor's energy and power of rising to the occasion. Dighton spent a long life in the office of the privy seal. The son of a priest and an unmarried woman, he needed papal dispensations to make him eligible to receive holy orders and the modest share of livings and prebends that fell to his lot.<sup>5</sup> He was a clerk of the privy seal by 1356,<sup>6</sup> so that he had served under Winwick a quarter of a century before his own promotion to the keepership. In 1380 his seniority was recognised by a mandate that his wage of 7½d. a day, hitherto paid by the wardrobe, should henceforth be paid directly by the exchequer.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, when Dighton became keeper, the exchequer was ordered to pay him the "accustomed wages of his office, so long as he shall stand in office, until order

<sup>1</sup> *I.R.* 465/5. The clerk was William Broxham, who received a gift of 20 marks for this service.

<sup>2</sup> *Anon. Chron.* p. 139, which, by anticipation, calls him "elit de Durreme."

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* p. 141: "Et puis alerount al place del evesque de Chestre pred la esglise de seint Marie de Lestronde ou fuist demurrant sire Johan Fordham, elit de Duresme et clerk del priuee seal, et rolleront tonayls de vine hors de soun celer et beyverount assez et departirount saunz puis male fair." This clemency was not due to consideration for Fordham, but to the prospect of more attractive booty and vengeance from John of Gaunt's manor of the Savoy, near at hand.

<sup>4</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1381-85, p. 35: "When by the king's command he took upon him the keeping thereof."

<sup>5</sup> *C. Pap. R. Pet.* i. 37, 420. This later petition was in 1363, and he describes himself as "the king's secretary."

<sup>6</sup> *I.R.* 380/22: a gift of 20s. to each of the four clerks, made on August 24, 1356, Dighton being third in order of seniority. Compare *ib.* 387/7.

<sup>7</sup> *Ib.* 475/13.



be taken for his continual abode in the royal household.”<sup>1</sup> He seems, however, only to have been appointed as a stop-gap, for within eight months a more imposing person was put in his place. Thereupon Dighton resumed his old position as a clerk of the seal, with 7½d. a day as wages. He was, however, now described as “secondary,” a title hereafter used to designate the chief of the four clerks.<sup>2</sup>

Dighton’s supplanter was a man of higher status. We have already spoken of most aspects of the career of Walter Skirlaw, a canonist, a protégé of archbishop Thoresby and a chancery clerk long employed in the diplomatic side of that office.<sup>3</sup> He now became keeper of the privy seal, acting from August 9, 1382,<sup>4</sup> to October 24, 1386.<sup>5</sup> With him the keeper of the privy seal again becomes one of the most active and powerful of the king’s ministers. The circumstances of the time gave great scope for Skirlaw’s diplomatic activity abroad, and he was also in attendance on the king, both at home and abroad, on several important occasions. Thus he was employed at Calais, early in 1384, negotiating for a peace with France which was not realised, accompanied by two clerks of his office, Guy Rockcliffe and Roger Elmham,<sup>6</sup> and in the autumn of that year he was paid his expenses for attending the king in Picardy at a date not specified.<sup>7</sup> Early in 1385, Skirlaw visited Paris on a diplomatic mission, attended by the same two clerks.<sup>8</sup> In the summer he attended Richard II. on his abortive Scottish campaign, accompanied by an armed *comitiua* of thirty esquires and thirty archers.<sup>9</sup> Finally he eloquently explained to the October parliament the reasons which had induced the king to appoint Pole earl of Suffolk, Vere marquis of Dublin and his two uncles dukes of York and Gloucester.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1381–85, p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> For Dighton as secondary, see later, p. 104.

<sup>3</sup> For Skirlaw’s earlier career, see above, iii. p. 400.

<sup>4</sup> “In vigilia sancti Laurencii”; *Exch. of Receipt, Warrants for Issue*, bu. 12, file 83 (dated Oct. 21, 6. R. II.).

<sup>5</sup> His successor received wages from this day; *I.R.* 515/17.

<sup>6</sup> *I.R.* 499/16, 502/7, 9, 18.

<sup>7</sup> *Ib.* 505/8. The entry is dated November 5, 1384. There seems no other evidence of Richard’s visit to Picardy.

<sup>8</sup> *Ib.* 505/23.

<sup>9</sup> *Ib.* 508/12.

<sup>10</sup> *Rot. Parl.* iii. 205. He is described as “doctor egregius, eloquens et discretus, magister Walterus Skirlaw, custos privati sigilli, Coventriensis et Lichfeldensis episcopus electus confirmatus.”



Such advocacy of the king's most unpopular acts stamped him, as much as Fordham, as a thoroughgoing partisan of Richard and the court. It was, therefore, inevitable that the triumphant barons in the parliament of 1386 should deprive him of office.<sup>1</sup> Papal provision had made Skirlaw bishop of Lichfield and soon translated him to the richer see of Wells. His consecration as bishop was of extraordinary splendour and was graced by the presence of the king.<sup>2</sup> However, a dispute with Richard, with reference to his translation, soon brought about a permanent coolness between the king and Skirlaw. This resulted in an approximation of Skirlaw to the side of the opposition. It was baronial influence that resulted in his further translation to Durham, when Fordham's royalism was punished in 1388 by his degradation to Ely. Save for a little diplomatic work abroad, Skirlaw's public career ended with his loss of the privy seal. He was henceforth absorbed in the work of his bishopric, where his liberalities won for him a great reputation.<sup>3</sup>

The solemn removal, in parliament, of the three great officers of the crown, on October 24, 1386,<sup>4</sup> was a ministerial crisis of quite a modern type. As this involved their successors' appointment in parliament, it went without saying that the new officials would be men in whom the estates had confidence. At first sight, therefore, it seems strange that the keeper of the privy seal should be a permanent member of the civil service, namely, John Waltham, keeper of the chancery rolls. He, like Skirlaw, was brought into the chancery by archbishop Thoresby, his great-uncle, being a member of the numerous clan which first found places in that office through Thoresby's care for his kinsmen and compatriots.<sup>5</sup> It is a striking illustration of a fact already noticed

<sup>1</sup> See above, iii. 413.

<sup>2</sup> Monk of Evesham, p. 60.

<sup>3</sup> For Skirlaw's later career, see iii. 436. For his munificence at Durham, see his life by Professor Tait in the *D.N.B.*

<sup>4</sup> The new keeper, Waltham, took wages from that date; *I.R.* 515/17. They were the usual 20s. a day; *ib.* 518/10.

<sup>5</sup> For Waltham's family, and his relation with the Thoresby clan, see above, iii. 215-216. He must be carefully distinguished from other John Walthams, not only from his father, a layman, and his uncle, sub-dean of York, but also from John Waltham, sacristan of the chapel of St. Mary and the Angels, York, and John Waltham, one of the king's carters. The passages that show the distinctions are *C.P.R.*, 1381-85, pp. 315, 442, 495, 518, 529. For his position at the privy seal, see above, iii. 413, 430; for his attitude as a chancery reformer, *ib.* pp. 442-444; and for his later work as treasurer, *ib.* pp. 461-462.

elsewhere that many of the leading chancery clerks, perhaps through their duties as the permanent officers of parliament, were constitutional rather than curialist in their sympathies. But Waltham's tenure of the privy seal, lasting until May 3, 1389, had on him exactly the contrary effect that the office had had on Skirlaw. Waltham's friendship with the opposition was destroyed after his three years at the privy seal, while Skirlaw, the mouth-piece of the court as an official, assumed as a prelate the ordinary attitude of the magnate. Within two years Waltham was again in office. During his later career, as treasurer and as bishop of Salisbury, he was, as we have seen, the man above all others whom Richard II. delighted to honour, both in life and in death.<sup>1</sup>

The fact of Waltham's appointment in parliament brought home more clearly perhaps than before the establishment of the privy seal as the third ministry of the crown. The petition of the commons on which the new appointments were based begged the king to nominate in parliament "sufficient officers," to wit, chancellor, treasurer, keeper of the privy seal and steward of the household, and also the other lords of his great and continual council.<sup>2</sup> The king granted this petition, except as regards the steward, and immediately, without consulting the council, chose a steward from the courtier ranks. This left only "three officers," an advance on the doctrine of 1380, when the keeper was only one of "five officers," the fifth being of course the chamberlain. The keeper of the privy seal was thus definitely recognised as the third officer of the crown, the commons' abandonment of the claim to nominate household officers emphasising the distinction between them and the privy seal keeper, who, not so long ago, was reckoned with them and even after them. The baronial triumph in 1386 secured, therefore, the constitutional position of the keeper of the privy seal,<sup>3</sup> and in 1388 the Merciless Parliament definitely picked out these "three officers," chancellor, treasurer and privy seal, to review the principal royal courts, namely, the chancery, the two benches and the exchequer.<sup>4</sup> All through

<sup>1</sup> Above, iii. 461-462. The bishop of Worcester kindly informs me that, according to *West. Abbey MSS.* 5262A, November 18 was the date on which the anniversary of his death was observed.

<sup>2</sup> *Rot. Parl.* iii. 221.

<sup>3</sup> The "trois officers le roy, cest assavoir, chauncellor, tresorer et gardeyn de prive seal," were ex-officio members of the commission.

<sup>4</sup> *Rot. Parl.* iii. 250. This was a commons' petition which received the royal assent.

Waltham's tenure of office, the importance of the privy seal and its dependence on the estates were constantly brought out. Thus Waltham took a conspicuous part in the work of the special commission set up in 1386, received the appeal of the opposition lords in 1387 at Waltham Cross, and had a hand in the chancery reforms which chancellor Arundel was then carrying through. So little departmental jealousy had he that he acquiesced in the transference of the custody of the ancient records of the privy seal to the chancery.<sup>1</sup> Final evidence of his popularity was his consecration as bishop of Salisbury during the session of the Cambridge parliament in 1388<sup>2</sup> that the estates might witness the promotion of their nominee. Inevitably, under such conditions, he yielded up office when the king, on May 4, 1389, dramatically asserted his intention of governing as well as reigning.<sup>3</sup>

We have examined the cautious steps by which Richard, after the great stroke in 1389, restored the exercise of the prerogative. Of the three ministers who now replaced the baronial partisans, only one could be regarded as unpledged to the constitutional tradition. This one, Mr. Edmund Stafford, who, on May 4, 1389, became keeper of the privy seal,<sup>4</sup> was far from belonging to the upstart courtier crowd to which Richard alone gave his full confidence. He was a man of higher birth than any keeper since Zouch, being, as we have seen,<sup>5</sup> the son and heir of that Richard Stafford who was the trusted intimate of the Black Prince.<sup>6</sup> He had enjoyed the possession of his father's estates since 1380, had been dean of York since 1385, and before that had made a distinguished career for himself as chancellor of Oxford University, a doctor of canon law and a practitioner in the ecclesiastical courts. But he had taken little share in politics or official life, and was, perhaps, the only keeper of the privy seal in this reign who was not a professional administrator. There is nothing in his

<sup>1</sup> See above, iii. 442, n. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Monk of Westminster, p. 189.

<sup>3</sup> See above, iii. 454-455. *I.R.* 524/3 shows that Waltham, bishop of Salisbury, was paid his 20s. a day up to and including May 3, the day on which Richard claimed his own in the council, "quo die exoneratus fuit ab officio predicto." His later change of policy has already been noticed.

<sup>4</sup> *I.R.* 524/17. Stafford's wages began on May 4, "quo die constitutus erat ad officium predictum."

<sup>5</sup> For a summary of his career and an estimate of his position, see above, iii. 462-463.

<sup>6</sup> For Richard Stafford, see above, iii. 334, 344; and below, p. 390.



record that suggests either corruption or subservience, and he seems to have been of the type content to do the daily task and follow implicitly the commands of the superior officer. Accordingly, he faithfully accommodated himself to the gradual development of the king's policy.

Stafford was the only one of the ministers and "lords of the great council" who did not surrender his office in parliament on January 20, 1390.<sup>1</sup> As all at once received them back, no political inference of value can be drawn from this act, except, perhaps, that it affords evidence of the exceptional strength of Stafford's position. In an ordinance of March 8, 1390, as to council procedure, the keeper of the privy seal was given the special function of examining bills or petitions of lesser moment, with the help of such of the council as happened to be present.<sup>2</sup> This suggests the strengthening of the privy seal as an office parallel and supplementary to the chancery, and the delegation of certain types of unimportant business to it. The privy seal was increasingly becoming a sort of secondary secretariat for work not appropriated by the chancery. At the same time John Prophet, a clerk of the privy seal since 1386, emerged as clerk of the council, with the result that the privy seal office stood to council in much the same relation that chancery stood to parliament.<sup>3</sup> However limited in numbers were the working councils of these years, the keeper of the privy seal was as indispensable a member of them as the chancellor and the treasurer. Such growth of departmental business meant that the privy seal was more "out of court" than ever. Thus in 1394-95, when Richard II. made his first Irish expedition, Stafford and the privy seal remained at home in England. In consequence the king corresponded with ministers and council under his signet.<sup>4</sup> Now that the privy seal had become so largely officialised, this newer instrument was needed to perform the functions

<sup>1</sup> See above, iii. 460.

<sup>2</sup> *A.P.C.* i. 18. Chancery, exchequer and common law matters were to be respectively referred to their appropriate offices.

<sup>3</sup> See above, iii. 466-467.

<sup>4</sup> *A.P.C.* i. 55, 57. Again in 1399, keeper Clifford remained in England during Richard's second Irish visit. Henry IV. and later kings faithfully followed these precedents; *ib.* i. 121, 129, 130, 135, 143. Consequently the keeper no longer followed the king as a matter of course, though he might be called to his side; *ib.* i. 129.



which the privy seal had originally discharged. Stafford had his reward for unquestioning service when, early in 1395, he was both elected and provided to the bishopric of Exeter. He was consecrated on June 20, but retained the privy seal until February 16, 1396, when he was succeeded by Guy Mone.<sup>1</sup> Made chancellor on October 23, 1396, his complaisance under Richard's autocracy in 1397-99 was as complete as his acceptance of his constitutional rule before that date.<sup>2</sup> In the same spirit of submission to authority, he adhered to Henry of Lancaster in 1399.

For his two last keepers of the privy seal Richard II. went back to the ancient tradition of promoting household servants. Stafford's immediate successor, Guy Mone, king's clerk,<sup>3</sup> had been receiver of the king's chamber since June 13, 1391, and belonged, therefore, to the type of Kilsby and Hatfield. He differed from them in retaining his receivership almost as long as he remained keeper of the privy seal.<sup>4</sup> On February 16, 1396, by the king's command, he took upon himself the keeping of the privy seal, though it was not until June 18 that chancery issued its mandate to the exchequer to pay him his usual wages "until order shall be taken for his continual abode in the king's household."<sup>5</sup> Unlike Stafford, he earned promotion by subserviency, and was made successively bishop of St. Davids and treasurer. He was succeeded at the privy seal by Richard Clifford,<sup>6</sup> who had won the king's favour as a clerk of his chapel in the evil days before 1388, and had been condemned by the Merciless Parliament. One of Richard II.'s first acts after assuming power was to establish Clifford as keeper of the great wardrobe. From this post he was, on November 14, 1397, nominated Mone's successor,<sup>7</sup> though he was allowed to combine the privy seal with the great wardrobe until February 2, 1398, and probably

<sup>1</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1392-96, p. 469.

<sup>2</sup> For the later stages of Stafford's career, see above, iv. 7-8, 45, 49-50 and 62.

<sup>3</sup> For Mone's general history, see above, iv. 8, 49.

<sup>4</sup> Until February 1, 1398. *C.P.R.*, 1396-99, p. 317, gives the limits of his receivership.

<sup>5</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1392-96, p. 469. The repetition of the formula is meaningless, and, as earlier, is in no wise suggestive of any intention of restoring the privy seal of office to residence in the household.

<sup>6</sup> For his career, see above, iii. 430, 464; iv. 49, 385.

<sup>7</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1396-99, p. 259, a mandate of April 20, 1398, ordering the exchequer to pay him arrears of his wages and fees from November 14 last, when he was advanced to be keeper of the privy seal.

later.<sup>1</sup> He remained in office until the fall of Richard II., when he promptly went over to Henry of Lancaster. He died in 1421 as bishop of London. If he was, as is generally said, one of the Westmorland Cliffords, he was, as regards family as well as career, a close parallel to his predecessor, Edmund Stafford.

Although the history of the privy seal for the last ten years of the reign showed that its keepers were devoted to the royal policy, the office continued to be essentially a ministry of state and showed no tendency to relapse into an office of the household. This comes out in the delicate balancing of the ministerial and official elements in the sort of inner council of royal confidants to which Richard II. assigned the delicate business of assessing fines from persons excused from attendance before the council. The three officers of state, chancellor, treasurer and privy seal, were matched by the three chamber knights who were Richard's special favourites.<sup>2</sup> Even a devoted minister, eager to carry out the royal wishes, could not get as near the king's heart as his unofficial dependents. Early in this chapter, we learnt that Richard Bury assigned the service of the privy seal to the household. By the fall of Richard II. it had definitely become the third ministry of state. A king strong enough, like Richard, to control his chancellor and treasurer, could dominate his keeper of the privy seal. But the office was now definitely out of court, and the omission from the mandate for the payment of Clifford's salary of the time-honoured phrase threatening a revival of residence in court<sup>3</sup> is proof that facts had at last overcome even the stubborn conservatism of the mediaeval official, so loath to adapt his forms to changing order.

## SECTION II

### THE OFFICE, HOUSEHOLD AND STAFF OF THE PRIVY SEAL

We have, perforce, in tracing the history of the keepership of the privy seal from the ordinances of 1311 to the deposition of

<sup>1</sup> See above, iv. 382, 386.

<sup>2</sup> *A.P.C.* i. 76.

<sup>3</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1396-99, p. 259, orders wages to be paid "so long as he shall stand in office." The old formula was used in the similar order on behalf of Mone in 1396; see above, p. 53, n. 5.

Richard II., already said much about the functions of the keeper, about the staff with which he worked and about its organisation both as an office for business purposes and as a household for keeping up some sort of corporate life. Our business in the present section is to deal with these matters more systematically and completely, setting forth what has to be said not so much in its historical development, as in a synthetic picture of the whole privy seal system as it was in the latter half of the fourteenth century. Before we approach the questions involved, it will be well to summarise such of the conclusions of the preceding section as tend to illustrate the adaptation of staff and office to meet the varying aims which at different times the privy seal was expected to fulfil.

In our last section we saw how the office of the privy seal, instituted as a household secretariat, slowly shook itself loose from the household and became an independent office of state, the third great ministry of the crown. There was an intermediate stage, the stage represented by the Walton ordinances, in which the function of the privy seal was neither wholly domestic nor wholly political, when it served as a control on the great political officers to compel them to execute the policy of their master rather than their own or that of the aristocracy. But this use of the privy seal was only imperfectly attempted, and never had any real chance of success. The conditions of the great continental war required, for many years, a division between the ministry in England and the ministry which followed the king to his wars overseas. Of the ministry attendant on the crown the keeper of the privy seal and his staff formed the nucleus. Every function of government had to be discharged by them. Just as, under normal conditions, every administrative function fell upon the chancellor, the "secretary of state for all departments," so during the war the keeper of the privy seal became the second chancellor for all such business as had to be dealt with by the king abroad with the advice of his immediate followers. The habit of entrusting to the keeper of the privy seal the great seal, as well as the privy seal, and of strengthening his modest staff with some of the best brains from the office of the chancery, completed his establishment as a second "secretary of state." He and his augmented office



discharged the duties which in modern days would fall to the secretaries of state for foreign affairs and for war.

This development of the keepership into a general administrative office abroad had a repercussion on the position of the keepership at home. An ambitious minister was unlikely to be contented with a position in his own country inferior to that which he held when in personal attendance on his master beyond seas. Inevitably he was called upon in England to perform many of the functions which he was accustomed to perform abroad. The immense growth of administrative machinery, and the inadequacy of a single office to act as the sole secretariat of state, furthered the development of the keepership into a permanent political office. The keeper of the privy seal gradually took upon himself nearly all the duties of the chancellor, though his position was subordinate rather than co-ordinate. There was absolutely no attempt to legalise, or even at first to recognise, this. It was the result of the march of events, and had the advantage of enabling the whole ground of state affairs to be covered without the establishment of a fresh administrative office. The dignity of the chancellor was unimpaired, while he and his staff were relieved of much of the detail that otherwise would have fallen upon their shoulders.

Under these changed conditions, the old tradition of hostility to the privy seal died away, though it was long before men cleared from their minds all suspicion of the privy seal being used to deflect matters of justice from their ordinary course. Thus, in the parliament of October, 1377, the commons combined with a new complaint against the signet their old grievance that the law was often delayed by letters of privy seal, and were informed that the law on these matters should be carefully executed.<sup>1</sup> There were similar complaints in 1378 in the parliament of Gloucester.<sup>2</sup> In 1379 the commons' remonstrance became more definite. They stated that letters of credence under the privy seal had been sent by various courtiers to different parts of the realm to seek for money for the king's use. These letters had the queues—strips of parchment on which the address was normally written—blank, and the persons accredited with them wrote thereon the names of any persons they chose, and sent them the letters, affirming that

<sup>1</sup> *Rot. Parl.* iii. 23.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* iii. 44.



the king demanded of them sums of money, and summoning before the king's council those who refused to pay.<sup>1</sup> The petition was granted. In the same parliament the burgesses of Calais complained that the butchers had been driven out of their share of the market hall, though their right to this had been secured by charter, on the pretext of a letter of privy seal sent to the treasurer of Calais.<sup>2</sup> On similar lines was the petition of the commons of 1383 that no commission from the chancery, or letter of privy seal, should disturb the property of any subject without due trial, and that such commissions should be forthwith cancelled.<sup>3</sup> Gradually, just as under the first two Edwards the great seal was upheld as the constitutional instrument against the encroachments of the privy seal, the privy seal came to be maintained as a constitutional seal against the signet, the instrument of arbitrary prerogative. An early result of this was the claim made by the commons of 1386, who impeached Michael de la Pole, that the keeper of the privy seal should be nominated in parliament along with the chancellor and treasurer. The king granted the petition, and on October 24, 1386, John Waltham, late keeper of the chancery rolls, became keeper of the privy seal with the goodwill of the opposition.<sup>4</sup> With the breaking up of that opposition, the complaints against the privy seal became ancient history. Within its sphere the privy seal was now fully recognised as an integral part of the machine of state.

To classify the functions of the privy seal beyond a certain point is not easy, for the mediaeval conception of affairs of state was so vague that it is hard to fix definite bounds to the competency of any government office. We have said enough of its function as warranty to chancery for the issue of letters of great seal. This side of its activity, overstressed by modern scholars generalising too much from the great masses of surviving "chancery warrants," became increasingly formal in the later years of our period, when the organisation of the signet office made the writ of privy seal a mere link in a lengthening chain of formalities. Almost, perhaps quite, as important was the privy seal's function

<sup>1</sup> *Rot. Parl.* iii. 62.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* iii. 67.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* iii. 162.

<sup>4</sup> His wages begin on that day; Stubbs, *C.H.* ii. 497, records the changes in the chancery and treasury, but omits to mention that in the privy seal, not realising the importance of the step then taken. See also above, iii. 413, 442.

as warranty to the exchequer for issues, for in the generation succeeding the Walton ordinances the writ of privy seal came near to superseding the chancery writ of *liberate* which had earlier been necessary to open the money bags of the treasurer. That late in the fourteenth century importance was still attached to privy seal warrants is seen in the attempt of the commons of 1389 to restrain the issue of pardons for murder, treason and rape under the great seal without a preliminary mandate under the privy seal. Their action led to legislation setting forth that "no pardon for treason or other felony pass the chancery without warrant of privy seal, except in cases when the chancellor can issue such pardons by virtue of his office, without mentioning the matter to the king."<sup>1</sup> But the privy seal office had much more important work than the issue of "warrants" to set other departments in motion. The real strength of the office resided in the original force of instruments under privy seal.<sup>2</sup> Apart from their importance in communication with foreign courts, and, to a less degree, with private persons, they, unlike signet letters, were regarded as perfectly constitutional and legitimate within certain limits, and a large amount of general business was transacted by them. Slowly also there grew up a rough sort of division of labour between the chancellor and the keeper of the privy seal, the general principle being that greater matters were authorised by the great seal, and lesser matters by the privy seal. Before Edward III.'s time most orders of moment involved a writ of great seal, and general commands under the privy seal only were unconstitutional, if not actually illegal. Under Edward III. and his grandson the privy seal, released from the household, became the appropriate seal for many minor purposes, though the great seal was still often thought necessary for high affairs of state and even more for matters of law.<sup>3</sup> But concurrent jurisdiction of

<sup>1</sup> Maxwell-Lyte, p. 23; Statute 13 Ric. II. 2 (c.l.) in *Statutes of the Realm*, ii. 69.

<sup>2</sup> See above, pp. 12-13.

<sup>3</sup> See for example the statute of Northampton, which forbade a writ of privy seal impeding the process of the common law; *Stat. of Realm*, i. 259 (c. viii.). Accordingly in 1335 a royal writ ordered the sheriff of Yorkshire to proceed with the outlawry of Hugh Lowther, who had "cunningly demanded a writ of privy seal to supersede the "exigent" contrary to the provision of the statute of Northampton that no order should be given by great or little seal to impede the common law"; *C.C.R.*, 1333-37, p. 531.

two offices and the use of one as a control on the other proved to be difficult in practice.

The keeper was at last, early in the reign of Edward III., definitely recognised as one of the three chief ministers of state, to be named with, though still after, the chancellor and treasurer. These three began to form a committee, either by reason of their offices, or as a permanent committee of council, to which the final decision in many important matters was delegated. Not only was the keeper, like chancellor and treasurer, an indispensable member of council. He had special influence on council, since its secretariat was largely under his control.<sup>1</sup> The reason for all this was that council was still regarded as an advisory, not as an executive body. As a matter of fact, the council of the fourteenth century was largely responsible for the administration of the kingdom. Yet it had no way of making itself felt, no authority to issue an executive order. To do this required a sealed document, and all seals were seals of the king. Resolutions of council, to be operative, had to be embodied in writs, emanating from either the great or the privy seal. It was the common possession of seals which closely bound together the chancellor and keeper. True, the treasurer had his seal also, but he was limited to finance, and for general administration his seal had not the currency of the great and privy seals. Thus the custodians of great and privy seals were the source of all general administrative instruments, outside the financial and the judicial spheres.

The great seal summoned parliaments,<sup>2</sup> and parliamentary statutes were often promulgated under writs of great seal.<sup>3</sup> But councils, great and ordinary, came to be regularly summoned by privy seal; and the execution of conciliar resolutions, now beginning to be called ordinances, was by writ of privy seal.<sup>4</sup> By this time, both parliament and council felt the need of recording its transactions. As neither had a secretariat of its own, the former had recourse to the great and the latter to the privy seal. The clerks of the two sealing offices were also appointed to give

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.*

<sup>3</sup> It was customary to send out to the sheriffs exemplifications of statutes under the great seal, often with orders for the publication. This continued the practice by which charters of liberties were earlier promulgated. See R. L. Poole, "The Publication of Great Charters by the English Kings," in *E.H.R.* xxviii. 444-453.

<sup>4</sup> See also above, p. 13.



their aid to the deliberative bodies in the management of their business. Thus chancery clerks arranged the composition, the business, the payment and the record-keeping of parliament, while privy seal clerks dealt similarly with the business of the council. Just as chancery clerks received parliamentary petitions, and acted as clerks of parliament and clerks of the commons, so privy seal clerks acted as messengers and agents of the council, kept its minutes, drafted and signed its resolutions, until one of its senior clerks became the clerk of the council. Struck by the constant conciliar use of the privy seal, scholars have often maintained that the privy seal was in a special sense the seal of the council. This view cannot be substantiated. However much the council used the privy seal, it did not exercise direct control over it and did not use it exclusively. Many of the more important resolutions of council were given effect to by writs of great seal, as is proved by the large proportion of letters patent and close that are annotated as warranted *per petitionem concilii* or *per concilium*. So long as both chancellor and keeper of the privy seal were active members of the council, the employment of the one seal or the other was a matter of convenience that depended upon the nature of the authorised act. If the privy seal was used more than the great seal, it was because the majority of acts of council were of the sort that naturally gave rise to a writ of privy seal. To this must be added the fact that a secretariat, in this instance drawn from the privy seal, had a natural bias in favour of its own means of authentication. Yet in spite of all, the privy seal can almost as little be called the seal of the council as the great seal can be called the seal of parliament. Moreover, as the fourteenth century advanced, other royal seals arose, notably the signet, whose keeper, the secretary, sat in council. However little traditional, the signet had the merit of expressing the personal wish of the king, who, after all, was the authority responsible for all executive acts. We shall have later to treat of signet and secretary,<sup>1</sup> but we must note that, for Richard II.'s reign at least, the council had upon occasion so much control over the great seal as to employ it to invalidate mandates under the signet.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the end of our period saw the growth of devices that some-

<sup>1</sup> For all the alternative small seals, see later, Chapter XVII.

<sup>2</sup> See above, iii. 469, for a case of this sort in 1393.



times did away with the necessity of sealing at all. The royal sign manual, the initials, or fully written out autograph of the king, began with Edward III.,<sup>1</sup> and became frequent under Richard II., as an authentication of executive acts. At other times the signature of the clerk of the council or of all the members present supplied the lack of a seal.

The great fact, never to be forgotten, is that the king governed the country and, whatever advice he took, was ultimately responsible for all executive acts. The primary function of council, like the primary function of parliament, a glorified council, was not executive or judicial, but consultative or deliberate. Bodies which advised rather than enacted had no need of a seal. Accordingly, we have never had a seal of parliament, and all through the middle ages we never had a seal of the council. No doubt it was to a large extent make-believe to pretend that both parliament and council possessed no executive function. Parliament was constantly trying to control or to regulate the executive, though rarely with much success. The council of Edward III. and Richard II. was almost as much an executive body as the council of the Tudors. Yet the limited governing council of Henry VIII. and Edward VI. managed, like its mediaeval predecessors, to get on without a seal. Only in the reign of Philip and Mary was a council seal at last, in 1556, instituted.<sup>2</sup> This was the formal recognition of the fact, patent for generations, that the king's council was the executive ministry of the realm. The wonder of it is that the council had done without a seal for so long.

We have often seen that, even in the fourteenth century, no clear distinction was made between deliberative, executive and judicial functions. With the extension of the importance of the privy seal, it was inevitable that it should acquire some place in the judicial system of the country. Like chancery, it issued writs, and writs of chancery were the beginning of all legal actions. Already the chancery was accidentally becoming a law court as well as the chief department of state, and it seems natural to expect that the minor office of state should participate

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, *Foedera*, iii. 657.

<sup>2</sup> See for this subject the valuable article on "The Seal of the Privy Council," by Professor L. W. Labaree and Mr. R. E. Moody, in *E.H.R.* xliii. 190-202.

in this new development. Special circumstances, however, retarded the growth of the judicial functions of the privy seal. When the original suspicion which its operations excited had abated as regards general administrative business, the old feeling of the danger of the interference of the privy seal with matters pertaining to the common law still survived. We see it manifested in the petition of the commons of 1371 against the interference of the privy seal with the course of justice.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, the keeper of the privy seal, like the chancellor, had some sort of jurisdiction gradually thrust upon him, especially in matters imperfectly cognisable by the common law. Thus, in 1349, the king was so much occupied that all persons who had business to prosecute before him that concerned the common law were instructed to have recourse to the chancellor, while all those who were pursuing before the king matters of special grace were directed to apply to the chancellor or to the keeper of the privy seal.<sup>2</sup> In this way the chancellor gradually acquired that jurisdiction which was later styled equitable, and almost from the beginning shared it with the keeper of the privy seal. In effect, as in general administration, so in legal, the more important cases went to the chancellor and the less to the keeper. Accordingly, we have growing up slowly, side by side with the judicial court of chancery, a similar judicial aspect of the office of the privy seal.

The injunction of 1349 was often acted upon. Sometimes "petitions of grace" were directly referred to the keeper of the privy seal; at other times the king himself sent a petition to the keeper for his examination.<sup>3</sup> Certain members of the council assisted the keeper in his deliberations. The keeper was beginning to exercise judicial functions with the help of assessors, when the council ordinances of 1390 involved further change.<sup>4</sup> Again as in 1349 business was divided between chancellor and keeper. But, while there was no qualitative division in 1349, in 1390,

<sup>1</sup> *Rot. Parl.* ii. 308.

<sup>2</sup> *Foedera*, iii. 181: "alia negotia de gratia nostra concedenda penes eundem cancellarium seu dilectum clericum nostrum custodem sigilli nostri privati prosequantur." The two ministers are to report to the king the things that cannot be done without him, along with their advice on the matter, so that the ultimate decision in doubtful cases remained with the king.

<sup>3</sup> See instances of both sorts in Baldwin, *King's Council*, p. 258.

<sup>4</sup> See above, iii. 465-466.

no doubt as the result of ascertained facts, "business of great charge" was left to the chancellor, while "bills of less charge" might be treated before the keeper of the privy seal and members of the council then present.<sup>1</sup> Professor Baldwin properly points out that these bills meant matters of small importance, and not the causes of poor men—so that even now we have no real adumbration of the Tudor "court of requests", although the keeper's services were often called upon, probably because it was cheaper to refer things to him than to the chancellor. The petitions which, under this ordinance, went to the keeper are such that no hard-and-fast line can be drawn between them and the petitions addressed to the chancellor.<sup>2</sup> Probably the two ministers had substantially concurrent jurisdiction, a jurisdiction by no means limited as yet to "equity" cases. The natural tendency, of course, was still for the bigger causes to go to chancery, which, if more costly, was more authoritative, learned and certain. The lesser cases, which went to the privy seal, tended to be largely the cases of suitors of modest means. But there is no need to pursue a theme which would take us far beyond our period. Not until the reign of Henry VII. does the "court of requests" appear as a separate, though modest, court of justice, different from the council, its parent. It was less clearly differentiated from the privy seal, whose keeper was its presiding officer and whose writs were its means of initiating and executing its proceedings.<sup>3</sup> The last complaint against the privy seal referred to its interference with the process of common law. These complaints had not long ceased when the privy seal became the source of a law court. The parallel between chancellor and keeper was then even more complete with the keeper sitting as a judge in a court in which proceedings were initiated and executed by writs of privy seal.

<sup>1</sup> Nicolas, *A.P.C.* i. 18b, cf. 84-86.

<sup>2</sup> See instances in Baldwin, pp. 259-260. But I cannot quite grasp his distinction between "council (privy seal)" and "council in chancery." We must be cautious in giving too clear definitions to vague tendencies. Jurisdiction was still delightfully mixed up, even more so than was administration, between different and conflicting authorities.

<sup>3</sup> See for all this I. S. Leadam's *Select Cases in the Court of Requests*, 1497-1569 (Selden Soc., 1898) and particularly Mr. Leadam's Introduction. Compare also W. S. Holdsworth's *History of English Law*, i. 207-211. It was bitterly assailed by the common lawyers and ceased to exercise effective jurisdiction after 1642.



Thus the office of the privy seal became a "second chancery" and an inferior "office of state," relieving the overburdened chancery of some of its less important administrative and judicial functions. But it never quite attained the position of either of the two traditional offices of state, the chancery and the exchequer. Both in order of merit and in importance, it was distinctly third. It remained useful as a link between the two state offices and the two offices which continued curialistic, the stewardship and the chamberlainship. Together these five constituted the "five great offices," which, by Richard II.'s time, were as often spoken of as the "three great offices" in an earlier generation. Yet the privy seal had greater affinity with the chancery and exchequer than with the largely domestic offices of the steward and the chamberlain, even though it had not their independence and self-sufficiency. Clerks of the privy seal were inferior in status, emolument and prospects to the staffs of the older offices, while it was still promotion for the keeper of the privy seal to be made chancellor or treasurer.

How imperfectly the office of the privy seal appreciated its new status may, perhaps, be illustrated by its incuriousness as to the preservation of its archives. During the very period that its power was in the ascendant, indifference in this matter seems to have increased, although at all stages the office seems to have paid little attention to mandates directing it to preserve or enrol documents. A file of drafts of the year 1322,<sup>1</sup> and occasional references to rolls of the privy seal,<sup>2</sup> suggest an obligation to enrol writs something after chancery fashion. Indeed, on several occasions distinct injunctions to enrol certain types of documents were laid upon the office. Thus in 1326 chancellor and keeper were jointly ordered to enrol all writs for payments or liveries made at the exchequer, and send them as estreats to that office. The chancery estreats survive from a much earlier date; those of the privy seal, if they were made, which seems doubtful, have absolutely disappeared.<sup>3</sup> Again, in 1338 the

<sup>1</sup> Maxwell-Lyte, pp. 26-27, refers to *Exch. Misc.* 4/11 as a "file of the year 1322, consisting of rough drafts, prepared by the clerks of the privy seal, of writs and letters to be sent to various persons, including the chancellor, or, in his absence, the keepers of the great seal. Others have been dispersed."

<sup>2</sup> See above, i. 34 and n. 1; ii. 304-305.

<sup>3</sup> Maxwell-Lyte, p. 27.



Walton ordinances directed that all privy seal warrants should be enrolled,<sup>1</sup> but if ever such enrolment was attempted, the results do not survive, even in a fragmentary shape. More than that, enrolment was certainly not practised in the privy seal office in the reign of Richard II. The proof of this lies in the fact that in 1385, two writs of privy seal were enrolled in chancery on the close roll "because no register is kept in the office of the privy seal."<sup>2</sup> In the light of this lack of business method, if not of real negligence, we can well understand the issue of a mandate in the very next year that the records of the privy seal for the reign of Edward III. should be transferred to the keeper of the rolls of chancery, and the acquiescence in the order of so vigorous a keeper as John Waltham.<sup>3</sup> This was also a curious anticipation of the modern policy of concentrating archives in a single depository, by which the successors of the keepers of the rolls of chancery, the masters of the rolls, have become responsible for the custody of all the archives of the state. The surviving fragments of privy seal archives have reached us mainly from the chancery and exchequer, both of these offices having had the excellent habit of filing the privy seals which they received as warrants for the issue of writs and payments. In similar ways, acts of council executed by writ of privy seal come to us, not directly from the privy seal office.

We have spoken already of early forgeries of the privy seal. With the increasing vogue of the privy seal under Edward III. and Richard II., such forgeries were, not unnaturally, still common. A few instances can be given at random, but a more meticulous examination, especially of judicial records, would no doubt add largely to their number. In 1328 John Eton was imprisoned at Oxford for the offence of forging the privy seal.<sup>4</sup> In 1333 Richard Batyn, a clerk of Wycombe, confessed to having counterfeited it. He was arrested at Wycombe, but his confederates effected his release by violence. He then fled to Abingdon, and was slain there in an attempt to resist recapture.<sup>5</sup> A curious result was a

<sup>1</sup> Above, iii. 72-73, 78.

<sup>2</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1385-89, pp. 32-33, "Pro eo quod registrum in dicto officio priuati sigilli non habetur." This close roll memorandum is printed in full in Maxwell-Lyte, p. 27.

<sup>3</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1385-89, p. 196. See also above, iii. 442, n. 1.

<sup>4</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1328-30, pp. 264-265.

<sup>5</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1330-34, pp. 494, 499, 503.

conflict between the ecclesiastical and the temporal jurisdictions. While the king pardoned the homicides who were only executing lawful orders, the diocesan, Burghersh of Lincoln, excommunicated them for laying hands upon a clerk.<sup>1</sup> The council requested the king to write to the bishop to remove the sentence, but we are not informed of the upshot of the affair. Another forger of the privy seal was Daniel Burgham, who was imprisoned in 1335 in the Marshalsea, on this charge. The evidence against him was doubtful and he was released on bail on condition of appearing before the king's bench in the autumn. Meanwhile he purged himself of offence by serving in the campaign against the Scots.<sup>2</sup> This leniency does not seem to have had good results, for in 1345, ten years later, a commission was appointed to arrest men who in large numbers stayed in secret places with counterfeits of the great and small seals, and daily sealed with them charters of pardon and other forged letters and writs.<sup>3</sup> A wider syndicate of forgery was investigated in the winter of 1367-68, when various commissions were appointed to arrest numerous conspirators for forging seals and money, both English and continental, among whose misdeeds was the forgery of the king's privy seal.<sup>4</sup> There was still some distinction drawn between the criminality of imitating the two seals, for the Statute of Treasons of 1352, which declared forgery of the great seal to be treason, implied by omission that it was not treason to counterfeit the privy seal. Similarly the keeper of the privy seal was not included among those ministers to slay whom was accounted treason.<sup>5</sup>

Let us now turn to the main subject of this section, and collect what we can learn of the clerks of the privy seal, beginning with their corporate capacity as the office of the privy seal and their social relations as the household of the privy seal. Then we may,

<sup>1</sup> *Rot. Parl.* ii. 73, where the culprit is called Hautyn, but the text cannot always be trusted.

<sup>2</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1333-37, p. 503.

<sup>3</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1343-45, p. 589. The original in Pat. No. 214, 19 E. III. pt. ii. m. 13d runs "plures contrafactores tam magni quam parui sigillorum nostrorum . . . litteras patentes sigillo nostro contrafacto ac alias litteras et brevia falso fabricata sub utroque sigillorum contrafactorum consignarunt et indies consignant." By a ludicrous slip in ii. 294, n. 2, I spoke of the king's "daily seal." The third line should run "great and little seals and daily seal with them."

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.*, 1367-70, pp. 50, 51, 63, 66, 68, 135.

<sup>5</sup> *Stat. of Realm*, i. 320 : *Rot. Parl.* ii. 239.

thanks to the quantity of information that survives, go on to speak with considerable particularity of the individual clerks.

We have already had occasion to say something of both the *officium* and the *hospicium priuati sigilli*. The office was the place where the clerks worked ; the household the place where they lodged and took their meals. At first both *officium* and *hospicium* were part of the king's own household. But even in the earliest times the exigencies of business, and in particular the attendance of the keeper at councils held far away from court, necessitated the finding of other places than the court for the privy seal clerks to work and live in. The fourteenth century's strong tendency to centralise government in a fixed " capital " made Westminster the most usual place for both office and household. Yet at least four stages had to be traversed before a firm establishment there was attained. We may pass lightly over the first stage, when the privy seal was the instrument of the chamber and its staff consisted of chamber clerks. In the second stage, under Henry III., the privy seal was transferred to the wardrobe and wardrobe clerks succeeded chamber clerks. During the latter years of Edward I., when the custody of the seal had become a definite obligation of the controller, certain specific wardrobe clerks were appointed to write for the seal. Whenever the controller went out of court, there was a controller's clerk who undertook his work as director of privy seal business.<sup>1</sup> As early as this, two wardrobe clerks had special grants for writing, transcribing and enrolling letters of privy seal under controller Benstead's direction.<sup>2</sup> Early in Edward II.'s reign there were two clerks receiving wages for " remaining in the wardrobe for writing letters for the privy seal," and a third whose functions included the safeguarding of its archives.<sup>3</sup> Here we have the beginnings of the office and its clerks, but development proceeded more rapidly after the 1311 ordinances had directed that the custody of the seal should be the sole function of a keeper appointed *ad hoc*.<sup>4</sup> When the privy seal and its keeper Northburgh were captured at Bannockburn, the two clerks of the seal, who shared their master's captivity,

<sup>1</sup> Thus in 1300 Geoffrey Stoke, clerk of John Benstead, the controller, abode at court in his master's absence " for the purpose of making letters under the privy seal."

<sup>2</sup> Above, ii. 69-90.

<sup>3</sup> See above, ii. 287.

<sup>4</sup> See above, ii. 195, 285-287.



were described as personal clerks of keeper Northburgh so vaguely that it is not clear whether they were clerks of the privy seal or not.<sup>1</sup> But by 1315 a new heading, *de priuato sigillo*, in the wardrobe accounts included allowances to two clerks of the seal, receiving half the amount of the fee of their master.<sup>2</sup> At last in 1318 the household ordinance of York revealed to us a special staff of four clerks "to write at the privy seal." Though still under the control of the keeper of the wardrobe, they formed, in fact, if not in name, an office of the privy seal. For some purposes they already constituted a separate sub-department, although their department was still a branch of the wardrobe. The evolution of it into an office "out of court," under the control of its keeper, was the work of the reigns of Edward III. and Richard II.

Even before 1318 there was some tendency to establish both office and household out of court. We have often had occasion to notice the long periods during which Roger Northburgh, his seal and his clerks were in London or Westminster, attending on the council, while the king was far away.<sup>3</sup> One consequence was that the wardrobe was burdened with heavy charges for the expenses of the keeper and his clerks during these absences from court.<sup>4</sup> On one occasion, at least, details of the expenses are given for a stay of 47 days in London of the keeper and his clerks. They include not only food—bread, wine, beer, meat, fish—but the hire of a house—a *hospicium*.<sup>5</sup> This payment of rent for a house shows that, under Edward II., the keeper and his clerks had no quarters of their own in Westminster palace. It is noteworthy also as an early employment of a phrase soon to become familiar, *hospicium priuati sigilli*.

In tracing the history of the keepers we have often come across this *hospicium*. It is somewhat obscured to us in Edward III.'s early years, partly because of the lack of detailed wardrobe accounts, and partly because in the "particulars" of wardrobe expenses that remain the special charges for the privy seal and

<sup>1</sup> See above, ii. 294-295.

<sup>2</sup> *E.A.* 376/7, f. 87 d.

<sup>3</sup> See above, i. 287-291.

<sup>4</sup> Maxwell-Lyte, p. 84, collects usefully some of these passages, which supplement those I have printed above, i. 288-289.

<sup>5</sup> Maxwell-Lyte, p. 84 from *E.A.* 375/8, f. 11d. Unluckily I omitted to quote this passage in my first volume. The crucial words are "per xlvij dies per quos fuit morando London. pro negociis predictis ut supra, ut in pane, vino, ceruisia, carnibus, pisce, conductione hospicii et aliis . . . xvj li. xiiij s et ob."



its clerks are lumped together with the general expenses of the wardrobe. The long sojourns of the privy seal abroad with the king, especially between 1338 and 1346, must have involved a constantly wandering *officium* and *hospicium*, with only occasional stationary periods at centres like Antwerp and Ghent. We next get clear light on our subject during Michael Northburgh's keepership between 1349 and 1354. I have already pointed out this keeper's absorption in diplomatic missions, and how, during his frequent absences from actual custody of the seal, his place was supplied by some of his senior clerks, such as Winwick and Ingelby, who were then allowed sums sufficient to enable them to keep up the *hospicium magistri Michaelis*, and later the *hospicium priuati sigilli*.<sup>1</sup> By this time it is clear that the "household of the privy seal" was a permanent establishment, that its normal location was in London or Westminster, that it was usually "kept" by the keeper, or in his absence by a senior clerk, and that its cost was such that the whole, or the greater part, of the payments made to the keeper were in his absence transferred to his deputy as keeper of his household.

The question arises of the exact meaning of *hospicium priuati sigilli*. If we could argue from the *hospicium cancellarie*, it might only mean the place where the senior clerks of the office had their meals, for we have certain evidence that there were many separate *hospicia* in which the chancery clerks took up their abode.<sup>2</sup> But the privy seal's normal staff of four clerks only formed a group much smaller than the large corporation of clerks who made up the household of chancery, smaller indeed than one section of that household, the band of six clerks who worked directly under the keeper of the rolls of chancery. It therefore seems reasonable to infer that the clerks of the privy seal had only one place of communal residence. There was no practical reason why so modest a group as these four clerks, who were not "fat, furred, and prosperous," nor divided into three different grades, like their chancery colleagues, should not all live together. We may accordingly interpret *hospicium* here in its literal sense of a house. Limited numbers made it easier for them than for the numerous and nicely graded clerks of chancery to keep up a corporate life. No doubt the restraint

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 31-34.

<sup>2</sup> See above, iii. 446-447.

of the *hospicium* became irksome to clerks of senior standing. Even when they were attached to the royal household, the same restraint was felt. Thus, so early as 1331 we find the meritorious senior clerk, John Carlton, given a wage of 7½d. a day, "whether at court or away from it," "for manifold services to the late king and the king, by the hands of the keeper of the wardrobe," with robes or their value. Coupled with the grant was the provision that he might "withdraw from the household, return thither again and stay there at board, as he will."<sup>1</sup> A new disruptive force arose in the late fourteenth century when certainly one, and perhaps more, privy seal clerks took to themselves wives. The one, Thomas Hoccleve, as a bachelor regarded the "privy seal," that is, I imagine, the *hospicium*, as his home, but was forced after his marriage to dwell apart in a "poor cot." Probably both Roger Elmham and Richard Prior were among the *clerici uxorati* of the privy seal staff.<sup>2</sup>

Was the *hospicium privati sigilli* also the abode of the keeper? Here again chancery analogy is valuable. Sometimes, though rarely, the chancellor entertained his clerks in his own house. It might well have been easier for the keeper of the privy seal to have put up in his own home the simpler household of the privy seal. I have found no evidence, one way or the other, for the reign of Edward III., but immediately afterwards, during Fordham's keepership (1377 to 1381), we know that the clerks lived and worked with the keeper in the house of the bishop of Lichfield or Chester at the east end of the Strand, near the church of St. Mary le Strand.<sup>3</sup> The authorities make it clear that Ford-

<sup>1</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1330-34, p. 224.

<sup>2</sup> For Elmham and Prior see later, p. 94.

<sup>3</sup> The evidence is worth stating in full. (a) "Johanni Fordham . . . in denariis sibi liberatis per manus J. Notyngham in hospicio suo juxta le Stronde"; *I.R.* 468/5, dated Aug. 5, 1378. "Hospicium suum" is practically the same phrase as "hospicium magistri Michaelis" quoted on pp. 31, and n. 2; 69, above. (b) Agreement for the release and marriage of the count of Saint-Pol, dated July 18, 1379, and drawn up "en une chambre deinz la mansion pur le temps le dit sire Johan Fordham en la suburbe et diocese de Londres overtement luez . . . ovesque les honorables hommes et sages, sire W. de Dighton et sire Johan Wenlyngburgh, tesmoignes," etc.; *Foedera*, vii. 227 (original edition). Dighton and Wellingborough were then senior clerks of the privy seal. Their transacting business with the keeper in his *hospicium* suggests strongly that it was both the *hospicium privati sigilli*, and for the moment the *officium* also. The identification with Chester's Inn is practically proved by *Anonimale Chron.* p. 141; see above, p. 47, n. 3.

ham's occupation was temporary, and two years later we find his successor, Walter Skirlaw, occupying another house in the same neighbourhood, namely, the house of the bishop of Bath and Wells in the parish of St. Clement's Danes, near Temple Bar.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps it is not more than a coincidence that nearly a quarter of a century later Chester's Inn was definitely known as the *hospicium* of the seal, when the poet Hoccleve lived there<sup>2</sup> with other members of the office, notably his friends Prentice and Arundel.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, Hoccleve several times speaks of going "home to the privy seal" in a fashion that suggests he lived in an official house of residence along with his colleagues.<sup>4</sup> There is a hint of a joyous, and not too discreet, corporate life in Hoccleve's stories of their drinking bouts, their late sittings and consequent difficulties in getting up in the morning.<sup>5</sup>

It is clear that it was the custom of bishops who had large town houses which they seldom occupied to let them out to hire, and that they often found suitable tenants in ministers and high officials who transacted business in the place where they lived. Such tenancies were naturally brief, and consequently the residence of the keeper and clerks varied from time to time. Here again the chancery analogy holds good, for, as we have seen, chancellors with no adequate homes of their own hired bishops' houses for themselves, and there were constant changes in the

<sup>1</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1381-85, pp. 285, 322; the appointment of a commission to inquire who broke into Skirlaw's house and stole his plate.

<sup>2</sup> *Works*, iii. 1/5-7.

"At Chestre ynn, right fast be the stronde,  
As I lay in my bed vp-on a nyght,  
Thought me bereft of sleep with force and myght."

*The Regement of Princes* from which these lines come was written about 1412. Hoccleve was then married and living in a "poor cot"; *ib.* 31/845; "Whan I at home dwell in my poore cote," *ib.* 35/940. This humble abode is certainly not Chester's Inn, so that we may infer that he is here giving a reminiscence of his bachelor days when he lived there with his brother clerks. For Chester's Inn see Stow, *Survey of London*, i. 77, ii. 193, ed. Kingsford.

<sup>3</sup> *Works*, i. 35/321-336.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* i. 31/185.

"And if it happid on the Someres day  
That I thus at the tauerne hadde be  
Whan I departe sholde and go my way  
Hoom to the priuee seal."

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* i. 34-5/305-320.



various chancery clerks' *hospicia*.<sup>1</sup> But it did not follow that because the *hospicium* was provided all privy seal clerks necessarily lived in it.<sup>2</sup> Yet the existence of the *hospicium*, whether it were for the lodging or only for the board of the clerks, gives the final blow to the doctrine that their natural abode was in the household. It strengthened the early pronounced tendency to set up the privy seal as an office of state. Only once was there a keeper of the privy seal who practically was a member of the royal household, and he was the altogether exceptional William Wykeham.<sup>3</sup>

We have seen that the *hospicium* from the time of its first appearance in the records was always located in London or Westminster. By then there is also evidence of the increasing localisation of the office at Westminster. Up to the reign of Edward III. the *officium* moved about with the king, though even before there were long periods when it was out of court. Early in his reign we have seen that there was a chamber allocated to the clerks of the seal in Westminster palace near the exchequer. A few years later Westminster was so much the normal place for meetings of the council, that one reason assigned for the privy seal going out of court was that the keeper had to be in Westminster to attend such meetings. We have also seen already how, between June 24, 1342, and May 31, 1343, keeper Offord was 150 days out of court, attending the council by the king's order at London and elsewhere, while between May 31, 1343, and April 10, 1344, he was staying at London for the council 278 days.<sup>4</sup> This being so, it is very likely that when, in 1346, a new pile of buildings was erected next to the exchequer of receipt and between Westminster Hall and the palace, the privy

<sup>1</sup> See above, iii. 157 and 210-212, and my "Household of Chancery" in *Essays in History presented to R. L. Poole*. Bishop Swinfield of Hereford rented his London house to Hamo of Chigwell, the lease providing that the bishop should have the right to reside there when called to London for parliaments and synods, and reserving a chamber for his steward; *Reg. Ric. de Swinfield*, pp. 467-478, C. and Y. Soc.

<sup>2</sup> Thus John Wellingborough, clerk of the seal, who was also prebendary of St. Stephen's in Westminster Palace, was granted, during his tenure of the prebend, the houses and chambers now occupied by him in the tower called "le bonde hous," over the second gate of the palace: *C.P.R.*, 1377-81, p. 410. Here is a late instance of a clerk whose normal home was in the king's palace, but it was by virtue of this prebend, not of his post in the privy seal.

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 40.

<sup>4</sup> See above, p. 18.



seal clerks were afforded room hard by the new council chamber which soon acquired the famous name of star chamber.<sup>1</sup> As the institution of the secret seal and signet<sup>2</sup> reduced the necessity of the privy seal office going constantly on its travels, letters of privy seal were more and more frequently issued from Westminster and London.

One fact alone tended to check this process of development—the absence of the seal and office for long periods when abroad with the king. This strengthened the political importance of the seal, but kept the office in residence at court. When the king ceased to take the seal abroad with him, the tendency to keep the office at Westminster was immensely strengthened. After 1360, if not from 1350, there was a permanent establishment in the capital, even when the keeper and some of his clerks happened to be abroad or in the country. In 1370, when Peter Lacy was residing at his country living of Northfleet in Kent, letters made in the office at Westminster were taken to Northfleet to him to be sealed.<sup>3</sup> And when Richard II. paid his second Irish visit he left the privy seal and its office in England.<sup>4</sup>

The result of all this was that the office was almost as firmly fixed at Westminster as was its neighbour, the exchequer. All through Hoccleve's constant references to the work of the privy seal and its clerks, it is assumed that Westminster was the normal place of its operations.<sup>5</sup> There is, I suspect, not the least suggestion that the privy seal ever left its headquarters. Its clerks lived in the western suburbs of the city; they went to their office by boat; they were as much Londoners as is the modern civil servant. Even the traditional formula of the writs for payment, hinting at the possibility of the office being called back to the household, began to be omitted. Enjoying fixity of tenure and being too humble to take sides, the clerks went on with their

<sup>1</sup> Baldwin in *E.H.R.* xxi. 15-17.

<sup>2</sup> See below, pp. 161-181, 195-211.

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 44 and n. 3.

<sup>4</sup> *I.R.* 439/35.

<sup>5</sup> See, for instance, *Works*, i. 102/183-186.

“As that I ones fro Westmynstar cam  
Vexid full greuously, withe thowghtfull hete,  
Thus thought I ‘A great fole I am,  
This pavyment a dayes thus to bete.’”

work without regard to changes of kings, governments or even keepers of the seal.

The modest requirements of the privy seal office are indicated by the disbursements made for its incidental expenses, up to about 1350 from the wardrobe, and afterwards from the exchequer. Thus in 1348 Adam Newbold, a clerk of the privy seal, received from the wardrobe a small grant *pro officio priuati sigilli*.<sup>1</sup> In 1375-76 a similar grant was made from the exchequer.<sup>2</sup> From the exchequer also came the sums necessary for supplying the office with furniture and appliances, while the great wardrobe issued green cloth for covering the table of the privy seal.<sup>3</sup> In 1375 a joiner, named John Wodener, was paid for making a calculating table and two forms for the privy seal office.<sup>4</sup> There were constant purchases of red wax, parchment, ink and other similar materials. Some of the entries in the issue rolls suggest survivals of the ambulatory office of an earlier generation. Thus in 1355 payment was made for a horse to carry the coffers of the privy seal, and for a pair of coffers, a sumpter-saddle and a chest.<sup>5</sup> In 1359 another chest was bought by the exchequer, "for keeping the memoranda of the privy seal."<sup>6</sup> But, as we have seen, the office does not seem to have been successful in preserving its records, and it may have been inefficiency in that respect which called forth the order of Arundel in 1386 that documents relating to the privy seal of Edward III.'s time were to be surrendered by the office to the keeper of the rolls of chancery.<sup>7</sup>

At last we can turn from the office and the household of the privy seal to the individual clerks who served therein. The average clerk was not a person of distinction, and it was by quite ordinary men that the business of the department was normally conducted. Mediaeval administration generally depended for its efficiency more on the ordinary man than on the occasional minister of character, so that, individually insignificant as they may be, these clerks have a collective importance. We have, especially for the latter half of the fourteenth century, a good deal of information about them, and it is worth while attempting to

<sup>1</sup> *Archaeologia*, xxxi. 89.

<sup>2</sup> *I.R.* 459/30.

<sup>3</sup> *Err. Acc. (W. & H.)* 3/44: allowance to one of the clerks of three ells.

<sup>4</sup> *I.R.* 456/17, "pro uno computatorio et duabus formulis . . . pro officio priuati sigilli."

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* 379/17.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.* 397/32.

<sup>7</sup> See above, iii. 441-442.

bring together what we know. Unfortunately it is much easier to amass minute details about the individual clerks than to come to any useful generalisations about them. We may list their names and the dates of their official appointments, and tabulate other similar facts, without knowing in the least what manner of men they were. We have, however, an occasional chance of making the dry bones of biography live by means of such copious autobiographical and personal information as was left by Thomas Hoccleve, the one clerk of the office who won for himself an extra-official reputation. Hoccleve was early inspired by another minor government official, Geoffrey Chaucer, to take up the study and composition of poetry. He was no great poet, but he showed an honest devotion to Chaucer's example and memory, and a minute and appreciative acquaintance with the poets of many lands, whose works he imitated or paraphrased in his own tongue. His voluminous and very human writings have preserved him some measure of fame down to our own day, and the historian of the privy seal has abundant reason to be grateful to him because he did not follow the strict rule of his master of suppressing personal history. Hoccleve had no indisposition to talk of himself and his daily work. His garrulous and self-regarding habit of mind gave personal touches to the most vapid of his compilations, and introduced a large autobiographical element into his works. Thanks to him we are enabled, in this chapter at least, to turn aside from arid records of long-forgotten business to illustrate our subject by personal human touches. We have already quoted his works in illustration of the earlier part of this chapter. Now we shall use his reminiscences of the daily life of a privy seal clerk at the end of the fourteenth century as freely as we can. Seldom, indeed, can the investigator of mediaeval institutions so fully vivify the formal description of administrative machinery by reference to the spirit and ambitions of a man who was once part of it.

Sufficient materials survive to enable us to make a list of the permanent clerks who wrote for the privy seal, almost from the moment of their first appearance in the early years of the reign of Edward II. down to the end of our period. The compilation of such a catalogue has been thought worth while in the hope that the particulars brought together will throw some light on the



administration of a minor department of state in the fourteenth century, as well as on the nature of the career and prospects of advancement of a minor government official of the fourteenth century. The fifty-four names we have collected are set forth in alphabetical order in an appendix to this chapter. Here we may attempt some generalisations arising from its study, although they must be given with due reserves, especially for the first half of the century when our material is incomplete. Only after the clerks' names have begun to appear regularly in the issue rolls can we regard our catalogue as trustworthy. Even then the list does not include all the clerks working in the office, but only the clerks on the permanent staff, the simultaneously serving "four clerks" whose names were set down in the rolls because they were in receipt of wages, robes, grants and allowances, first from the wardrobe, later from the exchequer. The supernumeraries, who did, one imagines, much of the copying work, are seldom named. We shall, however, be able to say a little even of them.

One striking fact emerges from a study of these lists, namely, that the privy seal office offered a life career to most members of its regular staff. There was no great chance of promotion outside the office, but there were few or no instances of dismissal for incompetence, and certainly no clerks were driven out on political grounds. Accordingly, we find many instances of long careers spent in this obscure service. William Dighton, for example, wrote for the seal from 1356 to 1393, a period of thirty-eight years, and Thomas Hoccleve served nearly as long, acting from 1387 to 1423. John Carlton served for thirty years between 1316 and 1346, when he was "retained on the king's council."<sup>1</sup> The elder John Wellingborough was a regular clerk between 1377 and 1395, and was also accredited with long service to Edward III.<sup>2</sup> He is not the only official whose preliminary service in a subordinate rank should be added to the more easily ascertainable years of his staff service. Such apprenticeship in official routine seems to have been almost a matter of course with the majority of the clerks. Allowing for this, and considering the short average of mediaeval life, these periods of service are remarkable for their length.

Let us next deal with the number of the clerks functioning at

<sup>1</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1345-48, p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.*, 1385-89, p. 421.



any one time. In fixing on four as the ordinary staff of the office, the ordinance of 1318 only recognised the number experience had already shown to be adequate. For the whole of our period the normal number of clerks was four,<sup>1</sup> and was never formally or permanently increased, although occasionally, when special responsibilities fell upon the office, a temporary addition to the staff was allowed. Thus in 1337-38, the time of the preparation for the first campaigns of the Hundred Years' War, when hostilities were also still active in Scotland, no less than seven clerks of the privy seal received wages from keeper Beche.<sup>2</sup> Although in 1338-40, when the privy seal and the office were in the Netherlands, no addition was made to the ordinary number of clerks, they were assisted by some of the chief chancery clerks who worked under the keeper's direction.<sup>3</sup> But in 1340 Kilsby, in the Netherlands, had with him six clerks of the privy seal as well as some chancery clerks,<sup>4</sup> and in 1353, when the privy seal remained in England, keeper Buckingham allowed robes to five clerks.<sup>5</sup> Finally in the Brétigni campaign of 1359-60 there were only four clerks attending Winwick, keeper of both seals,<sup>6</sup> but like Kilsby in 1338-40, "chancellor Winwick" had the help of some of the leading chancery clerks. At the same time there was a fully organised privy seal office in England.<sup>7</sup> When peace made possible the return to a single seal office, the complement of clerks was still four, the old number. In the reign of Henry IV. the number was temporarily increased to nine.<sup>8</sup> But in 1444 there was drawn a distinction between the four or five chief clerks and the seven

<sup>1</sup> Prof. Baldwin, in speaking of a "staff of five clerks," under Edward III. (*King's Council*, p. 258), assigns too much authority to the document quoted in that very miscellaneous collection called *Ordinances of the Royal Household* (1790), p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> *E.A.* 385/5. The seven clerks were J. Westmancote, J. Etton, J. Ferriby, Reginald Donnington, Robert Watford, J. Carlton and Richard Castle (de Castello).

<sup>3</sup> See above, iii. 85-86.

<sup>4</sup> Above, iii. 115. See for details *E.A.* 389/8. The clerks were J. Ferriby, J. Carlton, J. Winwick, H. Ingelby, R. Watford and R. Donnington. The two new names were these of Winwick and Ingelby, both of whom became exceptionally important.

<sup>5</sup> *E.A.* 392/12, f. 40d. They were Winwick, Ingelby, Welwick, W. Tirington and W. Bolton. The last two were new names since 1338-40.

<sup>6</sup> See above, p. 36, and iii. 225-226.

<sup>7</sup> See above, pp. 37-38, and iii. 222-223.

<sup>8</sup> Baldwin's *King's Council*, p. 258. I owe to this scholar the reference to *Council and Privy Seal*, file 9, July 23.

under clerks who did the mechanical work of writing. The latter expected to be promoted in due course to the higher posts as vacancies occurred, and resented the intrusion of a stranger not bred up in the office.<sup>1</sup>

Yet, even under normal conditions, four clerks were not enough to transact the daily work of the office in times of pressure. No doubt the four clerks always had supernumerary or assistant clerks, as we have seen the chief clerks of chancery had. Sometimes we learn the names of these clerks, and, on occasion, a little of their doings. Below the supernumeraries were the laymen and servants who did the rougher work of the office, among them being the sumpters, valets and porters of the seal. The only important post which was held sometimes by a layman, apart from the keepership, was the stewardship of the household of the seal.

From the beginning of the separate keepership, the keeper had clerks and dependents of his own, who, though not strictly part of the office staff, worked in the office and are more easily tracked than the supernumeraries. From Edward I.'s time onward the clerk of the keeper was an important person in a modest way. Thus Geoffrey Stokes, the clerk of John Benstead, stayed at court in his master's absence to write letters under the privy seal, and received 4½d. a day for the expenses of his single horse and the wages of his single groom.<sup>2</sup> Again, Roger Wingfield, who occupies a place of some importance in the history of the chamber, was the personal clerk of Northburgh when he lost seal and liberty at Bannockburn.<sup>3</sup> Men who did not receive wages from the wardrobe seldom have their names recorded in wardrobe accounts, so that references to the keeper's clerks are rare, even under Edward III., when the names of only two clerks of the keeper are given, both in the latter part of the reign.<sup>4</sup> Under Richard II., however, seven different clerks of the various keepers are constantly mentioned.<sup>5</sup> Most of

<sup>1</sup> Maxwell-Lyte, pp. 33-34.

<sup>2</sup> *L.Q.G.* p. 83. No doubt Stokes' real wages came from his "dominus," Benstead.

<sup>3</sup> See above, ii. 294-295.

<sup>4</sup> These are J. de Maidenbury, clerk of keeper Buckingham in 1360, *I.R.* 401/25, and Alan Whitby, clerk of keeper Carew, in 1371-74; *ib.* 442/18, 444/20, 30, 449/2, 448/2, 20, and 445/1, 11.

<sup>5</sup> These are (a) under Fordham, W. Bloxham (1377), *ib.* 465/5, 8; (b) under Dighton, W. Tanner (1380), *ib.* 475/13, and W. Bloxham (1381), *ib.* 481/22; (c) under Skirlaw, John Danby (1382), 493/3; (d) under Waltham, Thomas Haxey (1387), *ib.* 515/26, William Bele (1388), *ib.* 521/1; Richard des Armes

them were clearly the personal clerks of individual keepers. Not one of the nine was clerk for any long period, and none was clerk to two successive keepers. One, William Styward, is described in one passage as steward of keeper Stafford, a phrase that possibly suggests a close connection with the *hospicium priuati sigilli*.<sup>1</sup> Some were employed on important missions, such as that of William Bloxham to the Roman curia to announce the coronation of Richard II.<sup>2</sup> None of the nine was even an officer of the department, and only one attained any prominence. This was Thomas Haxey, whose attack on the court in 1397 nearly cost him his life. Haxey's attachment to the constitutional party was no novelty. Ten years earlier he had been acting as clerk of keeper Waltham, whom we remember to have been forced into the keepership of the privy seal by the triumphant baronage.<sup>3</sup>

Not only the keeper but the four clerks of the seal had clerks of their own. John Prophet, the secondary, had a clerk in Robert Fry in 1394.<sup>4</sup> After the fall of Richard II., Thomas Hoccleve had John Weld as his clerk, at least from 1414 to 1417, and possibly from 1410.<sup>5</sup> Unlike the clerks of the keeper, these clerks of clerks often became clerks in their own right. The above-mentioned Robert Fry, for instance, was a clerk "in the office of the privy seal" by 1395. Even before he began to act as Hoccleve's assistant, John Weld was described in 1408 as "a king's clerk of the office of the privy seal."<sup>6</sup> In the same

(1389), 521/20; (e) under Stafford, Thomas Boreway (1389), *ib.* 527/5; Richard Allerton (1394-95), *ib.* 549/6, 554/14, and William Styward (1393), *ib.* 542 (Dec. 14), 543/15. Roger Elmham, called "unus clericorum in officio custodis" in *ib.* 499/16, was, of course, really one of the four clerks. But he acted as Skirlaw's clerk in 1387, *ib.* 518/10.

<sup>1</sup> Styward is mentioned as Stafford's clerk in 1393, *I.R.* 543/15, and as "senescallus suus," *ib.* 546/15. He does not appear again till March 1, 1396, *ib.* 554/20. For "senescallus" compare *ib.* 532/2, where Robert Erle, esquire, so acted in 1390, also for Stafford, *ib.* 517/11.

<sup>2</sup> *ib.* 465/5. A grant to him of 20 marks "pro eo quod nuper profectus fuit versus . . . dominum papam . . . ad reuelandum sibi de coronatione regis."

<sup>3</sup> See for Haxey above, iv. 17-19.

<sup>4</sup> *I.R.* 546/19.

<sup>5</sup> The evidence for Weld's agency for Hoccleve is collected by Dr. Furnivall in Hoccleve's *Works*, pp. lviii-lxii. In 1410 and 1412, Weld received money on Hoccleve's behalf. Later, Hoccleve's moneys are also paid "per manus Johannis Welde clerici sui."

<sup>6</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1408-13, p. 42, a grant of lands not exceeding four marks a year in value, to John Weld and Richard Prior.



entry another clerk of the office, Richard Prior, was similarly described.<sup>1</sup> This strongly suggests that there were persons regularly employed in doing writer's work in the privy seal office beside the four clerks. Perhaps the slight difference between Weld's and Prior's description and the usual *unus clericorum de officio priuati sigilli* may in itself indicate a grade of assistant clerks subordinate to the four. A similar conclusion is forced on us when we read at almost the same time in Hoccleve of friends of his, and obviously colleagues in the office, whose names we seek for in vain in the places where clerks of the seal commonly appear. Such, for instance, were John Prentice and John Arundel, the two hard-drinking and late-lying colleagues spoken of in the *Male Regle* as vying with the poet in his malpractices and yet escaping his excessive punishment.<sup>2</sup> I have found no evidence that Prentice and Arundel, any more than Weld and Prior, were among the "four clerks" in 1406, the year to which Dr. Furnivall assigned this poem. The four clerks were then Hoccleve, Bailay, Heath and Offord, as they were in 1407.<sup>3</sup>

Another indication in the same direction is the fact that often individuals claimed to have served in the office for a much longer period than that for which there is proof that they were formally "clerks of the seal." This applies to some of the most eminent men on our lists. Thus Henry Ingelby, only known to be a clerk in 1341, is mentioned at that date for his "good service

<sup>1</sup> For Prior's subsequent fortunes, and renunciation of his clergy, see below, p. 94, n. 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Works*, i. 35/321-326.

"I dar nat seyn Prentys and Arondel  
Me countrefete, and in swich wach go ny me :  
But often they hir bed loven so wel,  
That of the day it draweth ny the pryme,  
Or they ryse up, nat tell I can the tyme  
Whan they to bedde goon, it is so late."

Prentice and Arundel were both king's clerks, and both received wardenships of chapels and hospitals in the king's gift. Each writ of appointment was warranted by privy seal; *C.P.R.*, 1408-13, pp. 72, 161, 297, 332.

<sup>3</sup> *Works*, i. 60/25-26.

"We, your servantes, Hoccleve and Baillay,  
Hethe and Offorde, yow beseeche and preye."

Of course the number of clerks now exceeded four; but such a passage may, perhaps, convey a hint of a superior position to the old four, not unlike that of clerks of the first bench in chancery.



done long ago," and as having then made "continual stay in court."<sup>1</sup> Reginald Donnington, not described as one of the four before 1340, seems to have been already in attendance at court in 1327.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, John Wellingborough the elder is accredited with "long service" to Edward III., though he is not recorded as receiving wages till 1374, and was very soon after this found of sufficient experience to discharge functions which were substantially those of the later clerks of the council.<sup>3</sup> Other examples could easily be given, and the analogous establishment of the chancery, where probation under a clerk of settled position was usual, shows that the practice was not limited to the privy seal office. It was a good way of ensuring experience, if not capacity, and apprenticeship was, after all, the one recognised method of vocational education in the middle ages.

Allowing for such subsidiary help, the privy seal office was understaffed. As business steadily increased, efforts were made to speed up the work by invoking outside help. We have seen, for instance, that under Edward II. chancery clerks had been called upon to aid the overburdened clerks of the privy seal.<sup>4</sup> Under Edward III. the regular staff was similarly supplemented. Even in 1370 chancery clerks wrote letters of privy seal in England<sup>5</sup> to borrow money for the king's use. When the king was abroad, chancery and privy seal clerks constantly shared the labours of the single secretarial office, directed by the keeper of the privy seal.<sup>6</sup> Then a wider appeal for help was sometimes necessary when letters and treaties had to be drafted after fashions strange to the English official. Thus between 1338 and 1340 keeper Kilsby availed himself of the assistance of the clerks of the *scabini* of Ghent,<sup>7</sup> and of a clerk of the duke of

<sup>1</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1340-43, p. 119.

<sup>2</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1340-43, p. 392.

<sup>3</sup> He is first mentioned in the issue roll in 1374 (*I.R.* 451/21); but compare *C.P.R.*, 1385-89, p. 421. See also later, pp. 101-102.

<sup>4</sup> See above, ii. 306.

<sup>5</sup> *Brantingham's Issue Roll*, pp. 220, 479.

<sup>6</sup> *M.B.E.* 203/98d. This was, as we shall see, in complete accordance with contemporary French usage.

<sup>7</sup> *Ib.* 203/183, "Diuersis clericis de villa de Gandauo, scribentibus diuersas litteras directas ad diuersas villas de Flandria . . . quia clerici regis nesciuerunt scribere in forma usitata in Flandria . . . per manus R. de Donyngton xls xxiiij° Feb." Compare *ib.* 203/96, "Supradictis clericis scabinorum de Gandauo, scribentibus xxiii breuia mittenda nomine regis usque partes Francie, in denariis

Brabant.<sup>1</sup> He did this not only because the king's clerks were overburdened but because they were ignorant of the forms of correspondence usual in Flanders and the empire. Presents are recorded to notaries and secretaries of the emperor, clerks of the imperial chancery, and a *consignator* of imperial letters.<sup>2</sup> The same accounts show that "letters of the emperor" were written under Edward's eye,<sup>3</sup> and sealed with the imperial seal, no doubt by virtue of Edward's office of imperial vicar. The preparation of these documents also clearly came within the sphere of Kilsby's activity.

Fresh affairs were always arising to occupy the office of the privy seal. The scope of the activities of the privy seal was steadily enlarged during the course of the fourteenth century, and by the time the worst pressure of the great war was over, the ordinary business of the office had grown very considerably. Such development threw greater responsibility on the staff, individually and collectively, for the management of a government department necessarily involved more effort than the direction of a household secretariat. This was met, not by an increase of the staff, but by occasional presents and annuities as encouragement to the clerks to do their best. In the reign of Richard II. clerical work hitherto transacted in other departments was imposed on the office. Somewhat tardily these extra labours were recognised, special payments being made in 1385 to "divers clerks of the privy seal for their labours by day and night." The phraseology is suggestive of extreme pressure.<sup>4</sup> Again, in 1393, moneys were issued to William Donne and other clerks in the office of the privy seal, for their labours, from the time of the coronation of Richard II., in writing divers transcripts and memoranda touching the state of king and

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eisdem liberatis per dominum W. de Kildesby, in precio x florinorum de scuto, xlvs."

<sup>1</sup> *M.B.E.* 203/98d, "Hanekino, clerico domini ducis Brabantie, scribenti diversas litteras et munimenta pro negociis regis, de dono regis per manus domini W. de Kildesby £4 : 10 : 0."

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* 98d; compare *ib.* 184, 196. The "consignator" was probably the "sigillator" "ein Beamter ständig mit der technischem Manipulation der Besiegelung betraut"; Breslau, *Urkundenlehre*, p. 407.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* 193, "Magistro Utrico, clerico imperatoris, et caeteris clericis sub eo scribentibus diuersas litteras de sigillo imperatoris, pro rege et negociis suis."

<sup>4</sup> *I.R.* 508/17, "pro laboribus suis die et nocte."

kingdom which, before these times, had in no wise been written out in the privy seal office.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, privy seal clerks were sometimes employed in other offices, as when Robert Fry divided his services for twelve years between the privy seal and the signet.<sup>2</sup> He finally went over to the signet altogether. No doubt the privy seal office felt its labour lightened by the institution of the signet office, but in lending its clerks to teach the clerks of the signet how to run their office, it lost as well as gained.

One result of the multiplication of the labours and responsibilities of the clerks of the privy seal was that some readjustments were made in the matter of the allowance for their support and in their emoluments. Whenever keeper or clerks were *extra curiam* they naturally required compensation for loss of maintenance, and the analogy of the "chancellor's fee" suggested how that could most easily be secured. Hence, when the keeper and his clerks were *extra curiam*, a lump sum of 20s. a day came to be allowed to the keeper for their joint expenses. As the periods of absence from court became longer and more frequent, until it was the exception for any of the staff to be *infra curiam*, the intermittent payment became a regular one. Later, this traditional £1 a day was raised, and it looks as if, by the end of the century, the £1 itself had come to be regarded as the wages of the keeper. For, from the early fifteenth century, certain Middlesex manors were assigned to the keeper of the privy seal for the duration of his term of office, "for the living of himself and the clerks serving under him in his office."<sup>3</sup> Occasionally, for the sake of economy, the £1 was reduced to 13s. 4d., and for years a qualifying phrase provided that the allowance was to cease if the king ordered the continual abode of the office in the court. In origin the allowance was definitely not for wages,

<sup>1</sup> *I.R.* 543/18, "diuersa transcripta et memoranda . . . que ante hec tempora in officio dicti priuati sigilli transcribi minime consueuerunt."

<sup>2</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1396-99, p. 463, a grant to him for twelve years' good service in the offices of the king's privy seal and signet.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.*, 1413-16, p. 329, gives an assignment during office to the king's clerk, John Wakering, keeper of the privy seal, of the towns of Great Stanmore, Little Stanmore, Edgware and Kingsbury, for the livery of himself and the clerks serving under him in his office, as other keepers of the office have had. This was on June 12, 1415. Between Wakering and Richard Clifford there were three keepers, Langley, Bubwith and Prophet. It looks as if this assignment began in their days, as we have no knowledge of it under Richard II.



but for the maintenance of the privy seal household.<sup>1</sup> The best proof of this is that, so early as 1351, similar payments were made during the keeper's absence to a senior clerk who "kept" the household, or office, in his stead. But gradually the clerks established a claim for a modest wage as well as maintenance, though to the end of our period the initial stages of the clerk's career are described as "good and gratuitous service."<sup>2</sup> References to their "great expenses" and "great bodily toil" incurred in the discharge of their duties also suggest a service not recognised by formal wages. It was a slow business altogether, and a long time elapsed before adequate steps were taken to satisfy the claim. In the early fourteenth century, it was a matter of minor importance whether the clerks received wages or not. They were household officials, living in court at the king's expense, or in common without court at the expense of the keeper, in what came to be called, as we know, the *hospicium priuati sigilli*. Such wages as they received depended, not on the keeper, but on the discretion of the steward and treasurer, and varied according to the clerk's personal status, ceasing when the king promoted him to an adequate benefice. Down to the end of our period there remain traces of this method of meeting the clerk's necessities. But by degrees the clerks acquired the right to regular wages, and were virtually disconnected from the household.

By the days of Kilsby and Offord, the privy seal clerk had already a normal wage of 7½d. a day, "allocated in the great roll of the household,"<sup>3</sup> the 7½d. being increased to 1s. when he was abroad on war service.<sup>4</sup> Even earlier, the sum of 7½d. a day was recognised as the wage which the clerk in the office might ultimately be expected to attain, as the grant made to John Carlton in 1331, discussed in another connection, shows.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> When a keeper of inferior status or one also engaged on other business was employed, such as Peter Lacy (*I.R.* 236/21), or when, the privy seal being abroad, a smaller staff was employed to administer the seal of the regent, the reduced fee only, 13s. 4d. instead of £1, was sometimes paid. <sup>2</sup> For instance, *ib.* 375/20.

<sup>3</sup> *M.B.E.* 204/208-209, "Vadia sua ad vii d. et ob. per diem in magno rotulo hospicii allocata." It was the regular rate for a large number of household officers.

<sup>4</sup> See below, pp. 89-90.

<sup>5</sup> See above, p. 70. Compare *C.C.R.*, 1343-46, p. 57, which shows the grant still operative in May 1343. There is no doubt but that the "king's clerk" of the former entry is the clerk of the privy seal.



Similarly in 1338 John Ferriby began to receive from the exchequer wages to that amount.<sup>1</sup> The grant was, however, conditional; it terminated when the king found other means of providing for him, notably by adequate ecclesiastical preferment. A generation later, William Dighton, who had a gift in 1356,<sup>2</sup> was allowed wages from 1363, though no payment was made to him till 1369.<sup>3</sup> He was still receiving them in 1380,<sup>4</sup> and still later, after having been for a short time keeper of the seal, he again drew his 7½d. a day until 1391,<sup>5</sup> and perhaps till 1393.<sup>6</sup> His successor, John Prophet, received exactly the same wage.<sup>7</sup>

After the middle of the century, the daily wage of 7½d. more usually appears as a salary of £10 a year, payable in two instalments of £5 each at Easter and Michaelmas. The first record of payment made in that way is for the year 1356.<sup>8</sup> In 1357 all four clerks received £5 each *de dono regis*,<sup>9</sup> and in 1358 that gift was repeated. It may well have grown into an allowance of £10 a year for each clerk,<sup>10</sup> though the problem is complicated by the fact that other payments were also being made to them as wages.<sup>11</sup> Ten pounds a year is roughly equivalent to 7½d. a day, so that it seems as if this rate was looked upon as suitable for a privy seal clerk who had by long service demonstrated his competence. The £10 are described as the king's gift, and are the first regular payments to privy seal clerks which are normally entered on the issue rolls as payable directly by the exchequer. But the question of exactly how much the privy seal clerk obtained by gift and in wages is not easy to answer. Thomas Hoccleve, for instance, tells us, over and over again, that his "livelihood amounted to £4 a year," and that it was impossible for him to live on such a pittance, especially since his "annuity"—that is, his exchequer grant—was his only other source of

<sup>1</sup> *I.R.* 303/33 and 306/4.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* 380/22.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* 489/6, 438/22.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* 475/13.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* 510/18, 518/1, 521/5, 527/4 and 532/14.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.* 546/10.

<sup>7</sup> *Ib.* 546/19.

<sup>8</sup> *Ib.* 433/10, payment to two clerks "super vadiis suis." Compare *C.P.R.*, 1396-99, p. 463, for 1399.

<sup>9</sup> *I.R.* 387/27. The clerks were Tirrington, Brigham, Dighton and Hilton.

<sup>10</sup> *Ib.* 392/28. It was "de dono suo in auxilio custuum suorum morandis et laborandis in diuersis partibus."

<sup>11</sup> *Ib.* 384/5, 388/44, 397/21, 27, etc.

income.<sup>1</sup> If at one time Hoccleve had "annual rents" of his own, they were insignificant in amount and perhaps early dissipated.<sup>2</sup> Yet the king recognised that his clerks could not live on the sums doled out by the keeper, especially as, after some years of service, they might wish to leave the *hospicium priuati sigilli*, just as their predecessors had left the *hospicium regis*, so as not to be subjected to the restraints involved in a common home and table.

Slowly payments to the clerks became, in theory as well as in fact, dissociated from the wardrobe. The last stage of the process is well represented by the change made in the method of paying William Dighton. Towards the end of his career, some years after his short-lived tenure of the keepership, an illuminating entry in the issue rolls for 1388 records a specific direction by the king that Dighton's wage of 7½d. a day, which he was wont to receive in the wardrobe of Edward III., was henceforth to be paid by the exchequer annually.<sup>3</sup> An ineradicable conservatism stipulated that the wages were to cease if and when Dighton obtained ecclesiastical preferment. The change was probably of more theoretical than practical significance. The important modification was the substitution of an annual for a daily wage, although a daily salary doled out at irregular and often long intervals was not, in effect, different from the annual payments now contemplated.

The particulars of the wages accounts of Dighton and Tirington, surviving by some fortunate accident, prove how unim-

<sup>1</sup> Hoccleve's *Works*, iii., *The Regement of Princes*, p. 34/932-935 (Early English Text Soc., 1897).

"In faith, fadir, my lyflodē, by-side  
Thainuittee of which aboute I tolde,  
May nat exceede yeerly in no tyde  
vj mark : that sittith to myn herte so colde."

Cf. *ib.* 36/974, 44/1217. The poem dates from about 1412.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.*, i., *The Minor Poems*, 36/361-36/2.

"Thy rentes annuel as thow wel woost,  
To scarce been, greet costes to susteene."

<sup>3</sup> *I.R.* 521/5 (Nov. 24, 1388), a royal order as to the 7½d. a day "quos idem Willelmus percipere consuevit in garderoba regis Edwardi, aui regis huius, pro radiis suis in officio predicto, et que quidem vadia vii d. et ob. predictorum dominus rex nunc liberare mandauit predicto Willelmo ad scaccarium suum annuatim percipienda . . . quousque idem Willelmus promocionem alicuius beneficii ecclesiastici fuerit assecutus." Compare *ib.* 438/22.

portant in practice was the change in the method of paying privy seal clerks' salaries. Both were allotted the usual wage of 7½d. a day, but so far from the money being paid either daily or annually, the wage was allowed to fall into arrears extending over many years. Dighton's accounts are the simpler to follow. They show that from February 24, 1363, to April 8, 1369, six years and forty-three days, no wages were received by him, so that the crown owed him as arrears for this long period £69 : 15 : 1½. Tirrington's accounts are more involved. There were arrears from May 22, 1360, to March 4, 1363,<sup>1</sup> and again from July 9, 1366,<sup>2</sup> to February 13, 1368, amounting to £49 : 18 : 4½. The debt would have been still greater but for the fact that, on March 4, 1363, he went to the *curia* at Avignon "on his own business," and only returned to the royal service, by the king's command, on July 9, 1366. A privy seal writ to the exchequer, dated December 4, 1368, seems to have failed to produce any cash, for Tirrington's arrears went on accumulating until a further £16 : 2 : 6 became due to him for the period between July 9, 1369, and November 14, 1370. On that last date another privy seal to the exchequer directed the settlement of his claim.<sup>3</sup>

These interesting accounts suggest various queries and reflections. Are they, for instance, isolated examples of a large number of similar documents, or were they unique? It is impossible to decide, but it is improbable that there were not other similar groups of documents, which have now disappeared. Again, how did the clerks live when paid no wages? Here the answer is that wages counted for little as compared with perquisites and preferment. Tirrington had some means of support in prebends at London

<sup>1</sup> *E.A.* 509/1, "quo die iter arripuit versus curiam romanam in negociis suis propriis."

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.*, "quo die idem Willelmus ad seruicium regis de mandato suo reuenit."

<sup>3</sup> These particulars are contained in *E.A.* 509/1 (Tirrington's accounts in a pouch, 34-42 Edw. III.), *ib.* 509/15 (Tirrington's accounts in a pouch, 43-44 Edw. III.) and *ib.* 509/6 (Dighton's accounts, 37 to 43 Edw. III.). The issue rolls record no payments to these clerks for several years, but begin again in 1369, when payments to Dighton are recorded in *I.R.* 438/22 on June 7, and to Tirrington in *ib.* 436/24 on Jan. 29 and *ib.* 438/29, 30, on July 5 and 16, and *ib.* 441/13 on Dec. 3, 1370. A London prebend claimed by Tirrington was disputed at Avignon, where he was accused of holding it by false suggestion; *C. Pap. Reg. Let.* iv. 92. Was this the business that took him to the *curia*? If so, he seems to have failed.



and Abergwili<sup>1</sup> and in two livings,<sup>2</sup> all presented to him by the crown in 1361, and, after 1367, in the grant of the king's wardenship of the king's free chapel within Shrewsbury Castle.<sup>3</sup> Dighton also had his prebends and livings.<sup>4</sup> While there is no doubt as to the theoretical responsibility of the wardrobe for the wages, it is equally clear that the only chance the clerks had of obtaining their money was by application to the exchequer. They must have felt some satisfaction in drafting the privy seals necessary to spur on the exchequer to make the issue. Conditions of payment being what they were, it was a matter of indifference to the clerk where the liability lay, or whether he was theoretically paid by the day or by the year. The easy-going ways of the office, which gave Tirrington three years' leave of absence so long as he did not demand pay, are also noteworthy. They perhaps explain to some extent why the privy seal was so persistently understaffed. To the general administrative historian it is disappointing to find, despite the numerous attempts made in the years of peace to set the exchequer in order,<sup>5</sup> the financial machine still functioning so indifferently as to make such scandals of deferred payment possible. Curiously enough, though these modest salaries could not be paid in peace time, as soon as the renewal of the French war was imminent the means to pay them were found. Did the increased war-subsidies of 1369 make possible the payment to Dighton and Tirrington of their arrears? The whole story gives a practical reason why responsibility for paying the salaries of privy seal officers should be invested solely in the exchequer, instead of theoretically remaining with the wardrobe, a body with which the clerks had ceased to have any real connection.

The primitive nature of the office and its original relationship to the wardrobe could still be detected, however, in the continuance of the allowance for robes. The only change was that in time all the clerks of the seal became of "sufficient estate" to be in regular receipt of two yearly robes, one for the summer and one for the winter season. For the summer robe 20s. was allowed, while for the thicker winter garment the grant was 26s. 8d.<sup>6</sup> Throughout our period the allowance for robes was payable from the ward-

<sup>1</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1361-64, pp. 80, 96.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.*, 1364-67, p. 419.

<sup>5</sup> See above, iii. 239-252.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* pp. 61, 74.

<sup>4</sup> See later, pp. 97-98.

<sup>6</sup> *M.B.E.* 204/90d.



robe, and therefore normally figured in the wardrobe accounts.<sup>1</sup> But it did not follow that the privy seal clerks were still regarded as wardrobe officials. Many other non-household officers continued to receive robes from the wardrobe. Even the chancellor's allowance for wine remained in the wardrobe accounts to the end of our period.<sup>2</sup>

Besides wages, the clerks also received various additional grants and perquisites, payments and allowances being constantly made for extraordinary services. A clerk who was sent on a mission, away from the court or his office, was pretty sure to receive his expenses and a "reward." In 1376, for example, Guy Rockcliffe and John Wellingborough, junior, sent to the Bruges conference, were paid £20 for drafting the articles and other memoranda of the agreements as to the projected peace with France.<sup>3</sup> During the early campaigns of the Hundred Years' War, when the clerks of the privy seal habitually attended Edward III. on his over-seas campaigns, they received *vadia guerre* over and above their *vadia pacis*. In 1342 and 1343 the peace wages of all the clerks and esquires of the household were augmented by 4½d. a day, so that they received for the whole campaign 1s. a day, the wage of the ordinary man-at-arms.<sup>4</sup> All four clerks of the privy seal were abroad from August 1342 to February 1343, and received this additional wage.<sup>5</sup> Like his chief, the keeper, each clerk was expected to provide a certain number of soldiers, for whom he drew "war wages." For this same period Winwick received pay for five horse archers, and his comrade, Donnington, for two.<sup>6</sup> Similarly on the campaign of 1359-60, which the keeper and his four clerks also made, the four clerks each began with extra *vadia guerre* of 4½d. a day, increased after September 29 to 1s. a day. Each had his armed following, ranging from Tirrington's

<sup>1</sup> For instances see *E.A.* 401/2 and 402/2. The payment for robes was sometimes made by the exchequer, but always credited to the keeper of the wardrobe; *I.R.* 384/5; *ib.* 388/25, 44.

<sup>2</sup> *E.A.* 401/2, 402/5.

<sup>3</sup> *I.R.* 459/27, "pro scriptura certorum articulorum et aliorum memorandorum de concordia tractatus pacis inter dominum regem et aduersarium suum Francie."

<sup>4</sup> *Household Ordinances, Edward III. to William and Mary*, p. 9 (1790).

<sup>5</sup> *M.B.E.* 204/108-9, "cuilibet pro incremento vadiorum suorum ad iv d. et ob. per diem ultra vadia sua ad vii d. et ob. per diem in magno rotulo hospicii allocata." The clerks were Bolton, Winwick, Donnington and Ingelby. Cf. also above, p. 84.

<sup>6</sup> *M.B.E.* 204/110d.

contingent, sometimes of one or two esquires and six archers, through Ashton's two and four, and Hilton's one and six, to Dighton's one archer only.<sup>1</sup> Most likely they were brigaded with the considerable contingent of the keeper and the other officers to form the fighting line, not simply guards of peaceful ecclesiastics transacting business in the rear of the army. More probably such soldiers were a source of expense rather than of profit to the clerks responsible for them, but, after all, it was only fair that the king's servants should do what they could to help fight his battles. Even the humdrum work within the office presented possibility of perquisites, though not on the noble scale that enriched the clerks of chancery. Fairly large sums passed through the hands of the clerks for buying parchment, red wax, ink, office furniture and other "necessaries" for their work,<sup>2</sup> and it is far from impossible that the Lincolnshire *pergamentarii* and the London stationers found it expedient to attract custom by some sort of present or percentage on purchases. The clerks also expected that any person who came to the office to obtain letters of privy seal should, in addition to the regular fees to the department, make a present to the clerk for his trouble in writing out the writ. But the great men on whose behalf writs were issued seldom went to the office in person. They sent their serving men instead, and Hoccleve waxed virtuously indignant at the tricks by which these flunkies robbed the poor clerks of their perquisites. They used to tell the clerk in a grand way that their lord would show his thanks another day, and would likewise manifest his gratitude by pressing the king to grant any favour which the clerks might seek of him. Not only did they never come back, nor pay the poor clerk a penny, but they complained to their lords of the extortions of the clerks, and so swindled their masters out of large sums which they put into their own pockets. Thus the clerks both lost their perquisites and, when hardly able to make ends meet for want of them, enjoyed an evil reputation as extortioners. They dared not

<sup>1</sup> *E.A.* 393/11, f. 86d.

<sup>2</sup> In 1342 the exchequer was ordered to supply parchment and red wax whensoever any of the clerks of the seal asked for it; *Exch. of Rec., Warrants for Issue*, bundle 5, file 30 (July 6). Sometimes the vendors of the wares got their money from the exchequer and sometimes the privy seal clerk himself obtained cash from the exchequer. Besides numerous entries on the issue rolls, see the passages relevant to Hoccleve's purchases collected in *Works*, i. lv-lxviii.

complain, lest these powerful servants reported against them and inflicted upon them still further harm.<sup>1</sup>

Low as were their wages and irregular as was their payment, as time went on the privy seal clerks tended to be treated with less rather than more liberality. Few grants were made until after a long period of "good and gratuitous service in staying continually with the king, not without great bodily toil and expenses."<sup>2</sup> In 1396 William Donne only got his annuity of £10 "in consideration of his good service for the space of ten years and more." The assent of the council was required to secure him even this favour, and he had to wait another year before he received any payment under it.<sup>3</sup> On two similar occasions, clerks had to complete twelve years' service before they obtained an annuity to this amount. One of these clerks was Thomas Hoccleve, who had been in office since 1387, but who obtained his annuity only in 1399, after the accession of Henry IV.<sup>4</sup> Robert Fry received a similar grant on January 28, 1399, "for twelve years good service in the offices of the king's privy seal and signet."<sup>5</sup> In 1398 Hoccleve and Fry had shared with their colleagues, Fleet and Heath, a more precarious grant to the same

<sup>1</sup> *Works*, iii. 55-56, 1499-1554.

"His letter he takith and forth goth his way,  
And byddeth vs to dowten vs no-thing  
His lord schal thanken vs an other day;  
And if we han to suë to the kyng,  
His lord may there haue al his askyng :

And where this bribour hath no peny payed  
Inoure office, he seith be-hynde our bak,  
'He payde, I not what': thus ben we bytrayed  
And disclaundrid, and put in wyte and lak  
Fful gilteles: and eeke by swiche a knak  
The man for whom the suyte is, is deceyued.  
He weneth we han of his gold receyued."

<sup>2</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1340-43, p. 392, an extract from the grant to Reginald Donnington. Cf. *ib.* p. 119.

<sup>3</sup> *I.R.* 355/4. The grant is enrolled in *C.P.R.*, 1396-99, p. 38, after a grant of December 1396. The issue roll shows that its date was April 1, 1396, though the first payment under it was made on May 21, 1397, and was made to recompense him for being prevented from obtaining earlier execution of the writ.

<sup>4</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1399-1401, p. 61. This also was payable by the exchequer and was "for his good service for a long time past in that office," and terminable on presentation to a benefice, without cure, worth £20 a year. Cf. below, p. 92.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.*, 1396-99, p. 463. This grant was from the issues of Wiltshire, so that its payments do not figure in the issue rolls.



amount for one year only, and that as a windfall, derived from the goods of outlaws who had forfeited their possessions.<sup>1</sup> Larger annuities, however, were sometimes given, and Hoccleve, in 1409, had his annuity raised to £13 : 6 : 8.<sup>2</sup> In the next generation a clerk served the privy seal for twenty years "without fee or annuity."<sup>3</sup>

The king's favour was not only slow to operate but was hardly ever unconditional. Sometimes, as to Ferriby in 1339, the grant for wages was only "until the lord king shall have thought fit to make other ordinance with regard to his condition."<sup>4</sup> Payment of Dighton's wages was subject to a similar limitation, "until he obtained promotion to an ecclesiastical benefice in the king's gift."<sup>5</sup> Macclesfield and Edmund Bayley had a £5 annual grant "during the war with France or until further order."<sup>6</sup> Hoccleve received his pension either for life, or until he had been promoted to an ecclesiastical benefice without cure of souls worth £20 a year.<sup>7</sup> From such phraseology we infer that the condition of things implied by the ordinance of 1318 still obtained in some measure, and that the natural reward for the clerk of the privy seal was ecclesiastical preferment.

One easy way for the king to reward his privy seal clerks, though perhaps not one that particularly commended itself to the clerks themselves, was to confer on them some sinecure office, or an office in some remote district, the duties of which might be discharged by deputy. Thus, Guy Rockcliffe and Lawrence Bailay in succession held for life the office of riding forester in the forest of Galtres with power to execute its duties by deputy,<sup>8</sup> and the office of *raglaw* in a commote in Gwynedd was several times conferred on privy seal clerks in the early fifteenth century.<sup>9</sup> Under Richard II., John Gerlethorp, "one of the king's writing clerks under the privy seal," received grants of the custody of a Devonshire park and of a small Kentish property forfeited by Robert

<sup>1</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1396-99, p. 408.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.*, 1408-13, p. 75.

<sup>3</sup> He was Richard Prior, for whom see later, p. 94.

<sup>4</sup> *I.R.* 306/4.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* 457/13.

<sup>6</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1381-85, p. 553. The reason for the limitation was that the grant was payable out of the revenues of an alien house of religion.

<sup>7</sup> Hoccleve, *Works*, vol. i. app. p. li. See also above, p. 91 and n. 4.

<sup>8</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1391-96, p. 201. The grant to Bailay was made in 1392, on Rockcliffe's decease.

<sup>9</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1422-29, pp. 205, 475.



de Vere.<sup>1</sup> When the sometime estate of a Yorkshire alien priory fell to the crown on the death of queen Joan, its life-holder, it was transferred in 1438 for life to Thomas Frank, clerk of the privy seal, "for good service to the crown during the last twenty years."<sup>2</sup> A still cheaper method of rewarding a clerk was in the grant of a charter of pardon for offences committed by him during his official career of "good and gratuitous service."<sup>3</sup>

A lucrative or important office rarely fell to the lot of a privy seal clerk. Hardly exceptions to this were certain grants to Henry Ingelby and Adam Newbold. In 1341 Ingelby was given "custody of the smaller piece of the seal for the recognisance of debts in the city of Norwich during good behaviour" in consideration of his "good service" and his "continual stay with the king as well beyond the seas as within,"<sup>4</sup> and in 1348 Adam Newbold received a grant of the same custody, with the difference that, by reason of his service at court, he was permitted to appoint first a deputy, then a successor, to discharge the duties of the office.<sup>5</sup> Later, in 1350, Ingelby received the important keepership of the *Domus Conversorum*,<sup>6</sup> which he resigned only in 1371,<sup>7</sup> being the last keeper of the house of converts who was not a chancery clerk. It is tempting to believe that when he kept the *hospicium* of the seal he sometimes lodged the clerks within the premises of the *Domus Conversorum*, just as the chancery clerks who held the keepership entertained there the clerks of the rolls. Another relatively important office was held by John Wellingborough the elder, who was, in 1388, given the office of chirographer of the common bench with the usual fees. This appointment was made in consideration of his long services to the king and his grandfather, and may, therefore, be regarded as in lieu of a retiring pension. The fact that it was made at the request of certain prelates and magnates suggests that Wellingborough, for all his loyal service to the crown, was in sympathy with the dominant majority of the Merciless Parlia-

<sup>1</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1391-96, pp. 363, 580. A "writing clerk" was, I think, not one of the "four clerks," but a subordinate who did the actual manual work of writing out writs.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.*, 1436-41, p. 197.

<sup>3</sup> Reginald Donnington was so rewarded in 1342; *C.P.R.*, 1340-43, p. 392.

<sup>4</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1340-43, p. 119.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.*, 1345-48, pp. 204, 417.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.*, 1348-50, p. 475.

<sup>7</sup> *Ib.*, 1370-74, p. 128.

ment, then in session.<sup>1</sup> If this surmise is true, he is a rare example of an official with political opinions, though we have already remarked two chancery officers who showed similar sympathies in the same crisis.<sup>2</sup>

Actually the church offered wider prospect of promotion than secular office. All clerks of the privy seal were eligible for ecclesiastical preferment, though no doubt their "clergy" was often nominal, and it is unlikely that many of them aspired to holy or even to minor orders. As in the chancery,<sup>3</sup> the *clericus uxoratus* was not unknown, and there is a famous example of a married clerk of the privy seal in Thomas Hoccleve. Roger Elmham<sup>4</sup> and Richard Prior<sup>5</sup> were possibly others. Marriage did not prevent Hoccleve going on with his daily task, but it barred the door to promotion in the church. An occasional layman

<sup>1</sup> There are two patents of appointment. The earlier, dated May 12, was "during pleasure" and "at the request of several prelates and magnates"; *C.P.R.*, 1385-89, p. 446. This was the operative act, for an ampler grant "for life at the special request of many prelates and magnates of the realm," made on June 5, was "vacated by surrender and cancelled"; *ib.* p. 421. The appointment is noteworthy as an instance of parliament taking an active interest in the promotion of an official at a time of acute political crisis.

<sup>2</sup> For the same parliament's procuring grants in favour of two chancery clerks, Scarborough, clerk of the commons, and Martin, clerk of the crown, see above, iii. 448.

<sup>3</sup> See my "Household of Chancery" in *Essays in History presented to R. L. Poole*, pp. 82-83.

<sup>4</sup> At one time I suspected that Roger Elmham, clerk of the privy seal from 1384 or 1391 or later, was a married man. But I fear that my ground was the identification of him with Roger Elmham, clerk of the works in 1388 (*C.P.R.*, 1385-89, p. 379), called "king's sergeant" in 1389; *ib.*, 1388-92, p. 83. In 1391 certain lands in Yorkshire were granted for the joint lives of this same Roger Elmham and Elizabeth Vancourt; *ib.* p. 505. The pair were man and wife a few years later (*ib.*, 1396-99, p. 160), and were probably about to marry when the grant was made. Unfortunately, the first-mentioned Roger Elmham was still a privy seal clerk on May 13, 1391, when he was sent to Portugal on the king's business; *I.R.* 533/6. This makes it unlikely, though not impossible, that Roger the clerk and Roger the king's servant were the same person. Roger and Elizabeth were still alive in 1401; *C.P.R.*, 1399-1401, p. 245.

<sup>5</sup> Prior's earlier history is referred to above, p. 80. In 1408 he was a king's clerk in the office of the privy seal, and in 1427, still described as "one of the clerks of the privy seal office," was made raglaw of the commote of Talybont, Merioneth; *C.P.R.*, 1422-29, p. 255. In 1427 he was appointed woodward of the commote of Penllyn, Merioneth; *ib.* p. 398. In a regrant of 1428 (*ib.* p. 255), Prior was called "king's sergant." This seems another instance of a privy seal clerk abandoning his clergy as soon as he could get a non-clerical post. Matrimony was, of course, the ordinary reason for such change of status, but I have seen no evidence of Prior's marriage.

at the head of the office did not lead to the introduction of the lay element among his chief subordinates, any more than it did in chancery. The only laymen allowed in the privy seal office were supernumeraries of humble rank. Benefices did not fall so frequently to the privy seal clerk that he often had occasion to abandon his post because of the lure of an ecclesiastical career. A living or a prebend might eke out his emoluments, but high office in the church seldom came his way. Not one privy seal clerk became a bishop. The highest posts in the church obtained by a clerk of the privy seal were the two deaneries of Hereford and York, held successively by John Prophet, but after he had become something more than a mere clerk, and as a reward for other services. Modest benefices, sinecures which did not take the clerk away from his service in the office, were what more usually fell to the lot of the clerk of the privy seal. It was a bitter blow to the elderly clerk when the looked-for benefice did not materialise. Only when weary of waiting for a living, and despairing of receiving one, did Hoccleve take the rash step of matrimony.<sup>1</sup> Thus debarred effectively from all chance of ecclesiastical preferment and reduced to his small pension, supplemented, after nearly forty years' service, by the grant of a corrody which gave him sustenance for life in the priory of Southwick, Hampshire,<sup>2</sup> he was not, after all, so badly off, but he was probably a man hard to help.

There are a few conspicuous exceptions to the rule that important preferment was outside the range of the privy seal clerk. Perhaps the most striking are Henry Ingelby and John Winwick. For Ingelby, the flood time came almost simultaneously with his appointment to the *Domus Conversorum*.<sup>3</sup> In 1349-50 he became prebendary of York, Wells and Southwell, rector of Houghton-le-Spring and of Sibson, Leicestershire. Papal indulgence, obtained at the request of Edward III., exempted him

<sup>1</sup> Hoccleve, *Works*, iii. 53/1450-54.

“ Ya, sothly, fadir myn, ryght so I am.  
I gasyd longe firste, and waytid faste  
After some benefice ; and whan non cam,  
By proces I me weddid atte last.”

<sup>2</sup> *A.P.C.* iii. 152. This was in 1424. He lived for nearly another quarter of a century.

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 93.



from the ordinary law against pluralities.<sup>1</sup> He ceased to be active after 1360, and though he retained the house of converts until 1371, he seems to have neglected its upkeep.<sup>2</sup> Winwick was even more successful. While he was still a simple clerk of the seal he accumulated an extraordinary number of livings and prebends. In 1341, the first year in which he is known to have been writing at the seal, he was appointed to a "modest prebend" in the chapel of St. Mary and the Angels at York.<sup>3</sup> Next year he received the free chapel within the castle of Shrewsbury and the free chapel of St. Julian's in Shrewsbury town.<sup>4</sup> In 1343 the king gave him a prebend in York cathedral, and in 1344 presented him to a living in his native county, the valuable rectory of Croston in Lancashire.<sup>5</sup> In 1345 he received the free chapel in Clitheroe Castle, also within his native county.<sup>6</sup> In 1347 he was made prebendary of Wells, a preferment into which the king forced him after law-suits against the bishop.<sup>7</sup> In 1349 Edward advanced him to the treasurership of York cathedral,<sup>8</sup> a post almost monopolised by king's clerks. In 1350 he was presented to the rectory of Wigan, another of the richest and most important livings in Lancashire,<sup>9</sup> again after a law-suit in which Edward victoriously vindicated his right of presentation. The hospital of St. Giles, Maldon, whose wardenship came into his hands in the same year, was a mere matter of exchange with a kinsman who had previously held it : <sup>10</sup> but next year we find Winwick holding at the same time as his treasurership and prebend at York, prebends at Southwell, Salisbury, Wells, Chichester, Lincoln and Lichfield.<sup>11</sup> No wonder he was able to contemplate founding a college of scholars. Perhaps the greediness of his heirs which prevented his object being accomplished was an hereditary trait.

If Winwick was the only clerk of the seal to make good a

<sup>1</sup> See, for his benefices and other ecclesiastical offices, *C.P.R.*, 1348-50, pp. 268, 269, 470, 474 ; *ib.*, 1354-58, pp. 153, 430, also *C. Pap. Reg. Let.* iii. 241, 252, 333, 457, 496, 503.

<sup>2</sup> See below, p. 99.

<sup>3</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1340-43, p. 102. The "modesty" of the prebend is recognised by *C. Pap. Reg. Let.* iii. 241.

<sup>4</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1340-43, p. 479.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.*, 1343-45, pp. 52, 300.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.* p. 486.

<sup>7</sup> *Ib.*, 1345-48, p. 428. We must distinguish the clerk of the seal from John, son of William of Winwick, the elder, presented in 1347 to Winwick, Northamptonshire.

<sup>8</sup> *Ib.*, 1348-50, p. 355.

<sup>9</sup> *Ib.* pp. 473, 496.

<sup>10</sup> *Ib.* p. 480.

<sup>11</sup> *Ib.*, 1350-54, p. 179.



career within the office, John Prophet, in a later generation, was the one clerk who made the office the jumping-off ground of a distinguished career. We shall speak elsewhere of his years of service in the office, of his good work as clerk of the council, and of his promotion to the new office of secretary in succession to Dighton.<sup>1</sup> It was new evidence of the increasing importance of the privy seal that its chief clerk, the secondary as he was soon to be called, could hold so important a post in the church as the deanery of Hereford, to say nothing of numerous prebends and benefices.<sup>2</sup> Under Henry IV. Prophet was called away from the privy seal to be the king's secretary and a member of his council. In 1406 he went back as keeper and remained in that office until 1415. Meanwhile he had been transferred from Hereford to the deanery of York. He died in 1416. Though his will was proved in the court of the northern archbishop,<sup>3</sup> he was buried in his Hampshire church of Ringwood, where he founded a chantry and where his brass may still be seen. Socially, he had good connections in Herefordshire and the adjacent Welsh March, where Sir John Oldcastle's first wife was his kinswoman, and where the good will of bishop Courtenay helped on his early promotion. Altogether, he had an honourable and successful course, though just stopping short of a bishopric.<sup>4</sup> His nine years' tenure of the keepership of the privy seal under Henry IV. far exceeds the periods for which his fourteenth-century predecessors held office.

Winwick and Prophet were exceptional. The possibilities of the office for a more ordinary person can be better studied in

<sup>1</sup> See later, p. 102.

<sup>2</sup> For the benefices he was permitted to hold with his deanery, see *C.P.R.*, 1391-96, p. 569, a ratification, dated May 15, 1395, of Prophet's estate as dean and canon of Hereford; and *Cal. Pap. Reg. Let.* iv. 354. They included prebends and canonries at Lincoln, St. Asaph, Abergwili, Ledbury, Tamworth, and Crediton, a sinecure chapelry and Ringwood rectory, worth altogether 30 marks. His dispensation allowed him two other benefices with cure of souls.

<sup>3</sup> It is printed in *Testamenta Eboracensia*, iii. 53, Surtees Soc.

<sup>4</sup> All that is known about Prophet is collected in Wylie's *Henry IV.* and *Henry V.*, especially in *Henry IV.*, ii. 484 n. and iii. 295 n., 351 n. There were other Prophets canons of Hereford and more than one John Prophet, one of whom represented Hereford city in the 1391 parliament; *C.C.R.*, 1389-92, p. 513. It was probably our John Prophet who drew up a notarial instrument in 1376 as a notary of the diocese of St. David's; *C.P.R.*, 1374-77, p. 292, but this diocese extends to within a few miles of Hereford.

William Dighton, a man possessing neither the social position nor the ability of these two successful clerks. Dighton was the life-long holder of a clerkship of the privy seal, and in the midst of his long tenure was, for a brief period, promoted to the keepership. By 1352 Dighton was rector of Trimmingham, in the diocese of Norwich,<sup>1</sup> and subsequently parson of Barking, Suffolk, and of Ash, near Wrotham, Kent. This latter living he afterwards exchanged for that of Wybarton, Lincolnshire. He was also in 1361 prebendary of Salisbury and Lincoln,<sup>2</sup> and in 1379 was nominated canon of York.<sup>3</sup> Though ordered by the pope to resign the rich living of Staindrop, Durham, in 1361, he still triumphantly appears as parson of Staindrop in 1382,<sup>4</sup> and in 1387 obtained the king's ratification of his estate both in the prebends which the pope permitted him to hold and in the church of Staindrop, which nearly thirty years before he had promised to abandon as the condition of holding the prebends.<sup>5</sup> Thus Dighton overcame his special difficulty in the pursuit of pluralities, namely, that as the son of a priest and an unmarried woman, he required at each step of his preferment, a dispensation from the Holy See.<sup>6</sup>

Even Dighton's success is not, perhaps, a typical example of the career of the privy seal clerk. Let us take at random three or four clerks of Richard's period. Lawrence Bailay, for instance, clerk between 1391 and 1398,<sup>7</sup> was in the same year rector of Pewsey in Wiltshire and Kippax in Yorkshire.<sup>8</sup> William Donne, clerk from 1387 to beyond our period, became warden of the hospital of St. John at Burford, and parson of Everdon in the diocese of Lincoln.<sup>9</sup> John Wellingborough, the elder, clerk for many years under Edward III., and also up to 1395, was, just before his death, at the same time rector of Bishop's Hatfield, Lincolnshire, prebendary of St. Paul's, London, of St. Stephen's, Westminster, of Wilton, and of Crediton, as well as being portioner of Beddington, Surrey, and warden of Sherborne hospital.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Cal. Pap. Reg. Let.* iii. 474.

<sup>2</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1377-81, p. 329.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.*, 1385-89, p. 252.

<sup>4</sup> *I.R.* 532/16, 559/3.

<sup>5</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1388-92, pp. 236, 358 (both in 1390).

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.*, 1388-92, p. 156. *Ib.*, 1396-99, p. 208.

<sup>7</sup> *Ib.*, 1391-96, p. 576.

<sup>8</sup> *Ib.* iv. xix. and 63.

<sup>9</sup> *Ib.*, 1381-85, p. 170.

<sup>10</sup> See above, p. 47.

There were also other clerks, like Hoccleve, who never got any benefice. The privy seal clerk had no ready-made avenue for ecclesiastical promotion such as the chancery clerk enjoyed, from the fact that a large number of crown livings of small value were expressly handed over to the chancellor's nomination so that he might reward therewith the clerks in his office. The keeper of the privy seal possessed no such patronage, and if the clerks could more or less rely on the king, there were always numerous claimants for direct royal bounty.

The discipline of the office was not so strict as to prevent the more enterprising clerks from doing profitable business on their own account, and thus supplementing their allowances. Again, we must refer to the careers of Henry Ingelby and John Winwick as illustrations of what a good thing could be made by a man of affairs out of his official position. Both these clerks carried on varied business operations with considerable success.

We find Ingelby in 1347 leasing, apparently for his own residence, the town house of the alien prior of Ogbourne,<sup>1</sup> and in 1349, as executor of a deceased London clerk, he bought, with the consent of his fellow-executors, certain houses belonging to the estate in the parish of St. Bennet's, Woodwharf, also apparently for his own occupation.<sup>2</sup> With the control of all this property, he had no difficulty in putting up the household of the privy seal when called upon to do so. As keeper of the House of Converts, from 1350 to 1371, he had, if possible, an even more assured home in London. So keen an eye to immediate gain had he, that he scandalously neglected the fabric of that House and left it in a ruinous state for his successor, though the sums paid to him by the crown for its custody were intended to cover the cost of its upkeep. He gave such small maintenance to the lawful inmates that a Spanish convert complained that he could not keep himself, his wife and his children on the sum doled out to him. Accordingly, the king increased the amount to a living wage, so that the convert might "have the more willing mind to abide in the Catholic faith."<sup>3</sup> But Ingelby's chief source of profit was a large practice in money lending, evidence of which lies in the

<sup>1</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1345-58, p. 228.

<sup>2</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1349-54, p. 234; *Cal. of Wills in Court of Husting*, i. 613.

<sup>3</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1364-68, p. 444.



numerous recognisances of debts due to him enrolled in the close rolls for 1345-74, especially those of the years 1354-68. Many apply to Ingelby alone, but he seems to have formed, or at least to have belonged to, a sort of money-lending syndicate, of which David Wooler, keeper of the chancery rolls, and other chancery clerks were members. This is a novel aspect of the co-operation of chancery and privy seal! As Wooler lived in Clifford's Inn, hard by the House of Converts, he was a close neighbour of his partner. After 1360 Ingelby seems to have resigned his clerkship of the privy seal, though he kept the House of Converts till 1371. The syndicate gradually broke up, and when Wooler died, Ingelby became his executor.

Winwick, the Lancashire squire's son, was as keen on business as his Yorkshire colleague. There is no need to repeat what has been said already about the career of this most interesting of all the clerks of the privy seal. But we must record, as a supplement to the story of Ingelby's dealings in usury, not only similar activities on Winwick's part, but his specially successful business of farming the revenues of some of the greater landed estates in Lancashire.

Winwick proved to be a competent and successful keeper of the privy seal, and only death prevented his attaining greater heights both in church and state. But for him we might well have said that the clerk of the privy seal had as little of a career inside his office as he had in the world outside it. In all the fourteenth century, Winwick is the one clerk who was promoted directly to the keepership, if we except William Dighton, whose long clerkship of thirty-eight years was broken for a few months in 1382 by a brief custody of the seal. Dighton seems, however, to have been a mere temporary stopgap, else he would hardly have been content to resume his old position as clerk and remain there until the end of his career. The third clerk who became keeper was earlier than either of these. He was that Richard Airmyn who is one of the first clerks known to have written for the privy seal, serving between 1314 and 1322. After five years at the chancery, Richard went back to the seal as its keeper in 1327-28. John Prophet later followed a similar course of promotion, acting as clerk from 1391 to 1395, then as king's secretary, finally returning to the privy seal under Henry IV. as keeper. Neither can be



regarded as disproving the contention that Winwick was the only clerk of the privy seal to whom the office offered directly a high political career.

The help which men like Fry and Prophet gave to the infant office of the signet is further evidence that the privy seal offered a restricted opportunity of promotion to other government departments. More important still, the increasingly intimate relations between the privy seal and the council opened up to a few fortunate clerks the prospect of even greater dignity, influence and emolument. There were two ways in which the opportunity could be obtained, either by membership of the council, or by helping the council in its secretarial and routine work. A clerk of no great position, though usually of higher rank than a mere clerk of the privy seal, was sometimes made a councillor, especially in the first half of the century, apparently for the sole purpose of employing his services in technical or secretarial work. But under Edward III. privy seal clerks began to be appointed to the council. One of the first to receive such an appointment was John Carlton, who had been working in the privy seal office at least as early as 1316. He was, on May 10, 1346, "retained of the king's council" and given, besides robes of office, a salary of 50 marks a year when in England, and 100 marks when beyond the seas.<sup>1</sup> Another was Henry Ingelby, appointed to be on the council in 1355.<sup>2</sup> This is further testimony to his exceptional position.

As time went on, it grew harder for government officials who were not ministers to become ordinary members of the king's council, but privy seal clerks kept open the way of entry to a subordinate position in this strictly guarded body by helping in its secretarial work.<sup>3</sup> John Wellingborough, for instance, in 1375 went as a messenger from the council to the king on secret business, and by appointment in 1377 was "attendant at our council" from the time of Richard II.'s coronation to that of the Gloucester parlia-

<sup>1</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1345-58, p. 80. This was when Michael Northburgh and Andrew Offord were also promoted to the council: *ib.* pp. 80, 91.

<sup>2</sup> *Foedera*, iii. 110.

<sup>3</sup> Prof. Baldwin's *King's Council*, pp. 362-368, gives an excellent summary of the process. In the earlier stages he hardly draws with sufficient clearness the line between clerical members of the council and clerks appointed to act because they are likely to be useful in secretarial and technical work. Perhaps the line cannot be drawn with precision.

ment in October–November, 1378.<sup>1</sup> Probably he served for even longer, but after about 1384 he was succeeded by Guy Rockcliffe, another clerk of the seal, as intermediary between king and council. Rockcliffe in turn gave way, towards 1387, to Mr. John Prophet. Besides “travelling to various places by command of the council,” Prophet was also “continuously remaining at the council.” Between 1380 and 1392 he often signed the minutes of the council and each article of the council’s instructions to the ambassadors to France.<sup>2</sup> A fee of £40 compensated him for “his labours and expenses in times past.” In 1393 he is definitely described as “clerk of the council,”<sup>3</sup> though the office was still so inchoate that, on the retirement of Dighton, it was thought advancement to appoint Prophet to the new office of secondary which Dighton had held. That he took his work as clerk of the council seriously is shown by the excellent minutes of the proceedings of council in 1392–93, which Professor Baldwin has happily printed.<sup>4</sup> The post was so personal to Prophet that no individual successor was found to him for the rest of Richard’s reign. A short-lived and obscure successor may have been the Mr. William Lambroke, king’s clerk, described in 1398 as “clerk of the council,”<sup>5</sup> though not, apparently, a privy seal clerk. More likely Prophet continued nominally responsible, and his clerk, Robert Fry, acted for him. Thus Prophet became, under Henry IV., the first of the long line of official clerks of the council, until he also was appointed to the post of secondary of the privy seal. Henceforth there was a regular succession of clerks of the council. Their connection with the privy seal gradually became less necessary, but in the middle of the fifteenth century we still

<sup>1</sup> *Exch. of Receipt, Warrants for Issues*, bu. 12, “Nous vous mandons qe a nostre ame clerke, J. de Wendlyngburgh leisne, facez leuerer de nostre doun de lavys de nostre conseil quarante liures de regards pur cause de trauaulx et coustages q’il a eu puis nostre couronnement encea en ce qil a este intendant a nostre dit conseil come il estoit ordenez. Done souz nostre priue seal a Gloucester le xxii jour d’Octobre, lan de nostre regne second.” Cf. *I.R.* 471/6 (Nov. 5, 1378). For other conciliar activities of Wellingborough, see *I.R.* 454/20, 456/10.

<sup>2</sup> *A.P.C.* i. 12b, 14b, 19, 21, 35, 41.

<sup>3</sup> *I.R.* 540/20.

<sup>4</sup> *King’s Council*, pp. 489–504. Its authorship is made certain by the “et moy I. Prophete” of p. 495. We owe to Professor Baldwin the proof of the soundness of Sir Harris Nicholas’ conjecture that Prophet was clerk of the council, a conjecture fiercely attacked at the time. See, besides Professor Baldwin’s book, his article in *E.H.R.* xxi. 17–20.

<sup>5</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1396–99, p. 358.

have in Dr. Thomas Kent an official who was both clerk of the council and secondary in the office of the privy seal.<sup>1</sup>

Mention of the secondary reminds us that in the days of Richard II. the establishment of a sort of head clerkship in the privy seal office gave a minor possibility of promotion within the office to one of the four clerks by assigning him a certain primacy in dignity and status. Some such distinction began to be drawn as early as the days of Edward II. From 1319 to 1323 we find Richard Airmyn receiving a larger allowance for robes than his brother clerks, though in 1315 he was treated no differently from his colleagues. He was clearly the chief of the four clerks, and we should not go far wrong in assuming that he held a position similar to that taken up, sixty years later, by the *secundarius priuati sigilli*.<sup>2</sup> Such a development was inevitable owing to the frequent absences of the keeper from the personal direction of his office. Besides, as keeper and clerks, on ceasing to live together at court, continued their quasi-collegiate existence in the *hospicium priuati sigilli*, when the keeper was away from the *hospicium*, some one else had to take his place, and a natural substitute would be the senior clerk. Accordingly, we find John Winwick keeping the *hospicium* in 1351 on behalf of the absent Michael Northburgh, and in 1354 Henry Ingelby similarly in charge. For Edward III.'s reign the evidence allows this faint suggestion of seniority, but we have learnt enough of the careers of Airmyn, Winwick and Ingelby to realise that their supremacy over their colleagues was due to something more substantial than seniority. They were the three clerks of the seal who stood out conspicuously from the general mediocrity.

Under Richard II. this vague and accidental supremacy crystallised into a definite office. We must not, however, be tempted to discover this office as existing early in the reign by misreading an entry in the issue roll of 1378 concerning *Johannes de Wendlynburgh senior clericus de officio priuati sigilli*.<sup>3</sup> Unluckily, there were two John Wellingboroughs among the privy seal clerks of the period, distinguished from each other as senior

<sup>1</sup> For details of all this see Baldwin, *King's Council*, pp. 366-8. Cf. below, p. 105.

<sup>2</sup> See above, ii. 304 and n.

<sup>3</sup> *I.R.* 471/6.



and junior.<sup>1</sup> It is certain that the entry simply means that the senior John was a privy seal clerk. Up to 1385 he continued to be *unus clericorum de officio priuati sigilli*. Had he been "senior clerk," it is difficult to see why he was passed over in favour of Dighton in 1382, when circumstances compelled the election of an acting clerk to the keepership. Anyhow, we find that, after his brief keepership had ended, Dighton was definitely called *secundarius priuati sigilli* for the rest of his life. The promotion was in dignity rather than in emolument, for Dighton as secondary continued to draw only his modest 7½d. a day, like any other clerk.<sup>2</sup> In this office Dighton was succeeded in 1394 by John Prophet, who, as we know, was an ordinary clerk of no long standing, and also clerk of the council. Though his official salary remained that of Dighton, the further large grant of £100 paid to him during the next year<sup>3</sup> showed that the actual emoluments of the post were far in excess of the nominal wages. After Prophet's time a regular succession of secondaries can be traced, and for a considerable period there was a tendency to

<sup>1</sup> John the elder became prebendary of St. Paul's on Sept. 15, 1377 (*C.P.R.*, 1377-81, p. 22), and in 1388 he was made chirographer to the common bench as we have already seen (above, p. 93). There was a John Wellingborough, subdeacon, aged 18, who was in 1333 given a dispensation to hold the living of Scaldwell, Northants; *C. Pap. Reg. Pet.* i. 31. He may well have been the John Wellingborough described in 1354 as steward of the household of Michael Northburgh, bishop elect of London; *ib.* p. 267. Northburgh was then keeper of the privy seal and the steward of his household, being a clerk, might easily have become one of the four clerks of the privy seal. John died in 1395 at the age of eighty. John the younger, also a king's clerk, was nominated for a canonry at Beverley on April 4, 1379; *C.P.R.*, 1377-81, p. 333. The two were in 1380 exchanging benefices with each other; *ib.* p. 552. They may have been related to G. Wendlingburgh, mentioned above, iii. 154, n. 5. All these personages are called Wendlingburgh in contemporary documents, but that is simply the fourteenth-century form of Wellingborough, Northants, so that, following my usual rule, I have described them by the modern name of their town of origin.

<sup>2</sup> In the fifteenth century the secondary had a special allowance of fur; *E.A.* 408/8. Maxwell-Lyte, p. 347.

<sup>3</sup> *I.R.* 546/19, "Magistro Johanni Prophete, clerico, secundario in officio priuati sigilli regis, percipienti per diem vij d. et ob. pro vadiis suis pro tempore quo ipsum stare contigerit in officio predicto, prout Willelmus de Dyghton, clericus, qui nuper dictum officium occupauit, percepit . . . per assignacionem sibi factam . . . et in pecunia numerata per manus Roberti Fry, clerici sui, c. li." This is dated Jan. 20, 1394. Prophet received another payment of the same sum on April 24, 1395 (*ib.* 553/1), and on Dec. 14, 1395, "de regardo pro diligentibus laboribus et custubus quos idem Johannes ante hec tempora subiuit et supportauit in officio priuati sigilli"; *I.R.* 554/12.



associate this office with the secretariat of the council. In 1444 Thomas Kent, doctor of law, received £100 a year for holding the combined offices.<sup>1</sup>

Such were the career and prospects of a clerk of the privy seal in the fourteenth century. Allowing for all things, it was not an avocation attractive to the abler and more ambitious aspirants after government service. One proof of this is the limited extent to which families established themselves in the privy seal office. There was little corresponding to the almost hereditary succession of certain official families, like the Thoresby-Waltham-Ravenser clan in the chancery, and the Brantingham and Chesterfield-Derby groups in the exchequer, although there was a slight tendency to bring kinsfolk into the office. The two Carltons, John and Henry ; the two Ferribys, John and Richard ; the two Winwicks, John and his less eminent brother, Philip ; the three Bailays, Edmund, John and Lawrence ; and the three Wellingboroughs, the elder and the younger John, and William ; show a clannishness suggesting a mild approach to the ubiquitous nepotism of the middle ages. But of the only two clerks who distinctly made their mark in the privy seal, one, Prophet, introduced no kinsfolk of his name into the office, and Winwick only found room for one of his brothers, though using his official position to save his father from the consequences of his lawless acts.

As for social status, it is hard to say from what stock or antecedents the privy seal clerks came. Ingelby belonged to a good family with landed estates in Yorkshire. His brother, Sir Thomas Ingelby, was a justice *coram rege*, and the founder, or aggrandiser, of the house of Ingelby which still possesses Ripley Park. The law was apparently even more profitable for him than the government service for his brother. When Henry went on pilgrimage to Rome in the jubilee year, he had a train of six horses and their grooms.<sup>2</sup> The Winwicks belonged to that class of the lesser landed gentry which played so conspicuous a part in the political and social history of mediaeval England. Others, including Dighton, the bastard of a priest, and Hoccleve, whose slavish attitude to life suggests a humble position in society, were of lower standing. Nor is it likely that the limited career of the privy seal often attracted men of

<sup>1</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1441-46, p. 277 ; cf. above, p. 103.

<sup>2</sup> *Foedera*, iii. 203.

higher education, or graduates of the universities. In the chancery such men were rare; in the modest privy seal they were even more exceptional. It is unusual for a clerk of the privy seal to be described as *magister*, that is as the full graduate of a university in any faculty. The great majority are simply called *dominus*, like any other non-academic clerk. Probably, as we have already had occasion to suggest,<sup>1</sup> most of them received their training by apprenticeship under one or other of the four clerks. But a few of them were university trained, as for example, Mr. John Prophet, John Welwick,<sup>2</sup> bachelor of civil law and notary, and the other notaries, Adam Hilton and William Tirrington. The notary's technical skill in drawing up documents in "public form" was essential for diplomatic work, especially for the drafting of treaties, and in this work the privy seal clerks, particularly during their service abroad, were constantly employed, sharing in this task with the still more important notaries of the chancery. A man had to pass through a long training and a careful examination before he could be admitted to the position of notary, by the pope or emperor, or by some delegate appointed by the conferring authority.<sup>3</sup> With these exceptions, the clerks of the privy seal were normally neither highly educated nor of conspicuous ability. The one privy seal clerk who won fame in literature speaks very modestly of his own ability and learning.<sup>4</sup>

Once more we have to cite Hoccleve, this time as illustrating the daily life of the privy seal clerk. There are dangers in this course, because Hoccleve was a poor and disappointed man, and likely, therefore, to depict himself and his surroundings in sombre colours. As he is, however, our sole source of intimate information, we must take him for what he is worth. But we

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 79-81.

<sup>2</sup> "John de Wellewyk, B.C.L., clerk of the king's privy seal and his special notary" so describes himself in 1355; *C. Pap. Reg. Pet.* i. 288.

<sup>3</sup> For the oath and obligations of a papal notary—and nearly all English notaries were empowered by papal authority—see *Registrum Ade de Orleton*, pp. 147-149, C. and Y. Soc.

<sup>4</sup> Hoccleve, *Works*, iii. 75/2073-2079.

"Simple is my goost and scars my letterure

Mi dere maister—God his soule quyte!—

And fadir, Chaucer, fayn wolde han me taght

But I was dul, and lerned lite or naght."

must not regard him as the type of the normal clerk. Rather is he an example of the clerk whose official life was a failure. His fluency in composition, coupled with his limited command of impersonal themes, led him to write constantly about his personal experiences, so that we need to be careful not to generalise too much from his gloomy pictures. Hoccleve's presentation of the privy seal office comes from an embittered and impoverished man. Weak of will, drunken, profligate and extravagant as long as health and money endured, suffering from bad health and chronic depression for the greater part of the time in which he was engaged in literary composition, Hoccleve was ever prone to emphasise the darker aspects of his fate. The daily task was laborious and trying. Only those who have not tried how hard is writing all day, year after year, can describe the copier's work as but a game. They are no more qualified to pass judgment on the clerk's labours than is the blind man to distinguish between colours.<sup>1</sup> A writer must always work at the same time with mind, eye and hand. If any one fail, he has to do everything over again. The writer cannot, while at work, talk to his friends, nor sing a song, nor play nor jest. The craftsman, who can do all these things when hard at work, labours with gladness, but the clerk, stooping and staring upon his parchments, works wearily in dull silence.<sup>2</sup> Few but the professional writers know the three great troubles that arise from the writer's craft, pains in the stomach, the back, and the eyes. After twenty-three years of writing, Hoccleve's whole body was smarting with aches and pains, and his eyesight was utterly spoilt.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Works*, iii. 36/988-994.

“ Many men, fadir, wenen that writynge  
No travaile is : thei hold it but a game.  
It is wel gretter labour than it seemeth ;  
The blynde man of coloures al wrong deemeth.”

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* 37/1009-1029.

“ This artificers, se I day by day  
In the hotteste of al hir bysynesse  
Talken and syng, and make game and play,  
And forth hir labour passith with gladnesse :  
But we labour in trauailous stilnesse ;  
We stowpe and stare vp-on the shepes skyn,  
And keepe muste our song and wordes in.”

<sup>3</sup>*Ib.* 38/1023-1029.



The privy seal clerk appears in Hoccleve as a rather poor-spirited and cowardly fellow, who expected to cringe before great men, and even great men's servants, making it up to himself by posing as the patron of watermen, cook-shopkeepers, tavern-keepers, and the venal beauties who haunted his favourite wine-shops.<sup>1</sup> Hoccleve had one solid and permanent ground of complaint in the extreme irregularity with which his annuity was paid.<sup>2</sup> Apparently it required a whining ballad to the chancellor before the writ could be extracted which ordered the exchequer officers to pay him his half-yearly dues.<sup>3</sup> This had often to be supplemented by appeals to the king, the sub-treasurer, or any other person in authority.<sup>4</sup> Above all, Hoccleve was beset with the constant dread of losing his annuity altogether, as soon as he was too old to continue at his task.<sup>5</sup>

Even from Hoccleve's lachrymose muse we can perceive that there was a brighter side to the life of the privy seal clerk. We have spoken of the good comradeship and merry life of the clerks in the office. Clearly no rigorous control was exerted over the life and amusements of Hoccleve and his colleagues. There was plenty of time for merry-makings at the Paul's Head and the Westminster taverns,<sup>6</sup> and no austere discipline prevented the clerks sleeping off their overnight debauch the next morning. A

<sup>1</sup> *Works*, i. 30-31/177-208.

“ Wher was a gretter maister eek than Y  
Or bet aqweyntid at Westmynstre yate,  
Among the tauerneres namely,  
And Cookes whan I cam eerly or late ? ”

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* iii. 30/820-826.

“ In the schequer, he of his special grace  
Hath to me grauntid an annuitee  
Of xxti mark, while I haue lyues space.  
Might I ay paid ben of that duetee,  
It schulde stonde wel ynow with me ;  
But paiement is hard to gete adayes :  
And that me put in many foule affrayes.”

The annuity of 20 marks was granted Hoccleve on May 17, 1409 ; *C.P.R.*, 1408-13, p. 75.

<sup>3</sup> *Works*, i. 58.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* i. 59-60, 62.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* iii. 31/834-847.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.* i. 29/143-144.

“ At Poules heed me maden ofte appeere  
To talke of mirthe and to disport and pleye.”

The Paul's Head tavern was on the south side of St. Paul's churchyard ; Stow, *Survey*, ii. 17.



real spirit of good fellowship existed among the clerks of the seal, and at times there was enough money in the purse for a clerk to hire a boat to row from the Strand Bridge to Westminster Palace, and to treat his friends to meat and drink.<sup>1</sup> Good comradeship was also to be found in official circles outside the office. Hoccleve perhaps looked up to Chaucer, not only as a poet, but as a brother-member of the household, or quasi-household, branch of the civil service. The dining-club to which Hoccleve belonged included his special friend, the "glad cheered" Henry Sumner, chancellor of the exchequer, who entertained the whole "court of good company" to dinner in the Temple on May Day, 1410.<sup>2</sup> When serious troubles beset Hoccleve, he found more consideration from his superiors than modern business methods might altogether allow. About 1415 serious illness drove him out of his wits. During all those years, his annuity was regularly paid. When he came back to the office in 1422, cured, although he was looked at askance by all the outside world, his fellow-clerks welcomed him and certified to his sanity, while his superiors allowed him to resume his work, and gave him a long-coveted corrody on his final retirement a year or two later.

With all his faults, Hoccleve could not have spent his life in idleness. The great bulk of his writings prove that he worked hard out of office hours, not only in verse composition, but also in the literary studies of which his poems are often but the echo. He was well acquainted with three languages, Latin, French and English, and was perfectly familiar with the *belles lettres* and even

<sup>1</sup> Signs of personal familiarity and sense of collegueship may similarly be collected from the generally arid correspondence between members of other offices. Thus the chancery clerk, J. Brancaster, called his important colleague, David Wooler, "mon tres cher sire et frere," and signs himself "votre frere" and "confrater vester"; *A.C.* xl/65, 66. Cf. the affectionate signature, "votre petit clerc, sil vous plest," of Richard of Eccleshall, the wardrobe clerk, in *ib.* xli/30.

<sup>2</sup> *Works*, i. 64-66, gives the ballad sent by "la court de bone compaignie" to Sumner on this occasion. Its date is fixed to 1410 because in that year May Day was on a Thursday. Sumner's whole career is interesting as showing the strengthening of the lay element in the exchequer. In the early years of Henry IV.'s reign, he held subordinate exchequer posts and is described as a clerk. Afterwards he is called the "king's sergeant" and was advanced in 1407 to be baron and in 1410 to be chancellor. He was also keeper of the Tower wardrobe and master of the mint; see above, iv. 480. Was he the first lay chancellor of the exchequer and the first who began the union of that office with the headship of the mint? Wylie's *Henry IV.* collects the details of his career, especially in iv. 47.

with some of the more serious literature of his age. He was certainly not open to the reproach, sometimes levelled against the literary official, of being a bad clerk and neglecting the daily task. There is sufficient proof of this in the solid quarto volume, largely in his hand, and now preserved in the British Museum, wherein are set down in business-like and orderly fashion common forms and typical examples of every manner of document which came within the sphere of the privy seal.<sup>1</sup> If we can illustrate the lighter side of the privy seal clerk's life from Hoccleve's verses, we are equally indebted to him for this volume, the only formula book from which we can study in detail the methods and traditions of the office of which he was so long the chief ornament. In fine his career leaves us with a strong impression that the business habits of the mediaeval official differed little from those of more boastful days, and that even a modern government department might learn something from the combination of corporate feeling, kindly influence and sufficient devotion to the task in hand, so abundantly evident in the office of the privy seal five hundred years ago.

## APPENDIX TO SECTION II

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF KNOWN CLERKS OF THE PRIVY SEAL UNDER  
EDWARD II., EDWARD III., AND RICHARD II.

Ashton, Matthew.	June 22, 1349-Dec. 11, 1361.	<i>I.R.</i> 348/14. <i>Ib.</i> 409/26.
Airmyn, Richard.	July 8, 1315-1323.	<i>E.A.</i> 376/7, m. 87. <i>MS. Stowe</i> , 553/108b.
Bailay, Edmund.	Mar. 6, 1385-Nov. 20, 1389.	<i>C.P.R.</i> , 1381-85, p. 553. <i>I.R.</i> 527/8.
Bailay, John.	1392-1402.	<i>C.P.R.</i> , 1401-1405, p. 50.
Bailay, Lawrence.	Feb. 9, 1391-May 3, 1398.	<i>I.R.</i> 52/16. <i>Ib.</i> 559/3.
Barton, John.	Feb. 1, 1316-July 7, 1320 and 1323.	<i>Enr.Accts.(W.&amp;H.)</i> 22/d; <i>Ad. MS.</i> 17,362/56. <i>MS. Stowe</i> 553/108b.
Bellano Monte, Guy de.	April 22, 1350.	<i>I.R.</i> 354/5
Bolton, William.	1340-Oct. 15, 1358.	<i>M.B.E</i> 204/90d. <i>I.R.</i> 394/4.
Brigham, John. <sup>2</sup>	April 8, 1344-Aug. 28, 1359.	<i>C.C.R.</i> , 1343-46, p. 299. <i>I.R.</i> 397/31.

<sup>1</sup> *Ad. MS.* 24,062.<sup>2</sup> He is described as William in *I.R.* 344/28.

Bury, Robert.	May 15, 1357.	<i>I.R.</i> 387/8.
Carlton, Henry.	1333-1335.	<i>I.R.</i> 287/21.
Carlton, John.	1312-Mar. 1343.	<i>Above</i> , ii. 288. <i>M.B.E.</i> 204/90d.
Castle, Richard.	Oct. 16, 1331-May 13, 1339.	<i>E.A.</i> 385/15. <i>I.R.</i> 306/11.
Colby, William.	1321-1327.	<i>MS. Stowe</i> , 553/25. <i>Ib.</i> ; and 108b.
Dighton, William.	Aug. 24, 1356-1394.	<i>I.R.</i> 380/22. <i>Ib.</i> 546/19; cf. <i>E.A.</i> 509/6.
Donne, William.	Nov. 27, 1388-June 20, 1399.	<i>I.R.</i> 521/5. <i>Ib.</i> 562/12.
Donnington, Reginald.	1338-39-1343	<i>E.A.</i> 388/5, m. 10; <i>I.R.</i> 314/5. <i>M.B.E.</i> 204/90d.
Etton, John.	1323-May 18, 1341.	<i>MS. Stowe</i> 553/149; <i>E.A.</i> 388/5, m. 10. <i>E.A.</i> 388/9 f. 29.
Elmham, Roger.	Feb. 8, 1384-May 13, 1391.	<i>I.R.</i> 499/16. <i>Ib.</i> 533/6.
Ferriby, John. <sup>1</sup>	1316-June 18, 1338.	<i>Enr. Acc. (W. &amp; H.)</i> 2/2d; <i>E.A.</i> 378/4. <i>E.A.</i> 388/5; <i>I.R.</i> 282/27.
Ferriby, Richard.	1320.	<i>Ad. MS.</i> 17,362/56.
Fleet, William.	1387-1398 ?	<i>Ad. MS.</i> 4596/128. <i>C.P.R.</i> , 1396-99, p. 408.
Fry, Robert.	1387-1399.	<i>C.P.R.</i> , 1396-99, p. 463.
Gerlethorp, John.	1394-1395.	<i>C.P.R.</i> , 1391-96, p. 363. <i>Ib.</i> p. 580.
Heath, John.	1387-1409.	<i>Ad. MS.</i> 4596/128. <i>C.P.R.</i> , 1408-13, p. 61.
Hilton, Mr. Adam (notary).	Aug. 24, 1356-Mar. 4, 1361.	<i>I.R.</i> 380/22. <i>Ib.</i> 403.
Hoccleve, Thomas.	1387-1424.	<i>De Reg. Prin.</i> lines 802-5. <i>A.P.C.</i> iii. 152.
Ingelby, Henry.	1340-Mar. 25, 1359.	<i>M.B.E.</i> 204/90d. <i>I.R.</i> 394/37.
Kirkby, William,	1320.	<i>Ad. MS.</i> 17,362/56, 61.
Lucy, Thomas.	1328-1389.	<i>E.A.</i> 384/1, m. 19.
Macclesfield, John.	Oct. 6, 1384-June 1, 1385.	<i>I.R.</i> 505/2. <i>C.P.R.</i> , 1381-85, p. 582.
Minot, Thomas.	Feb. 4, 1348.	<i>I.R.</i> 340/27.
Newcastle, Richard.	1311-1312.	<i>Above</i> , ii. 287.

<sup>1</sup> Between May 7 and June 18, 1338, he was engaged "extra curiam."

Newbold, Adam.	June 14, 1343–May 26, 1350. <sup>1</sup>	<i>I.R.</i> 329/15. <i>Ib.</i> 354/15.
Newhay, Thomas. <sup>2</sup>	1312–1313. July 8, 1315–Jan. 31, 1316.	<i>Above</i> , ii. 288. <i>E.A.</i> 376/7, m. 87.
Prophet, Mr. John.	Mar. 6, 1391–Dec. 14, 1395.	<i>I.R.</i> 536/22. <i>Ib.</i> 554/12.
Rockcliffe, Guy.	Feb. 17, 1376–Dec. 30, 1389. <sup>3</sup>	<i>I.R.</i> 459/27. <i>Ib.</i> 527/19.
Sheffield, Roger.	? Aug. 1310–1320	<i>A.C.</i> 37/93. <i>Enr. Acc.</i> ( <i>W. &amp; H.</i> ) 2/2d.
Sutton, Walter.	1311–1312.	<i>Above</i> , ii. 287.
Thornham, Roger.	1320.	<i>Ad. MS.</i> 17362/56, 61.
Thorp, J.	1334–1347.	<i>I.R.</i> 294/6.
Tirrington, William (notary).	Nov. 17, 1350–Dec. 3, 1370.	<i>I.R.</i> 355/12. <i>Ib.</i> 441/13 ; <i>E.A.</i> 509/1.
Watford, Robert.	1337–1338–Nov. 30, 1340.	<i>E.A.</i> 388/9, mm. 11, 29 ; <i>I.R.</i> 181/19. <i>I.R.</i> 314/15.
Welwick, John (notary, B.C.L.).	1353–Dec. 9, 1357.	<i>E.A.</i> 392/12, m. 40d. <i>I.R.</i> 388/25.
Wellingborough, John, the elder.	Feb. 7. 1374–April 22, 1385.	<i>I.R.</i> 451/21. <i>Ib.</i> 508/2.
Wellingborough, John, the younger.	Feb. 17, 1376.	<i>I.R.</i> 459/27.
Wellingborough, William.	Feb. 9, 1391.	<i>I.R.</i> 532/16.
Wenlock, William.	May 3, 1359.	<i>I.R.</i> 397/1.
Westmancote, John.	1331–1332. Feb. 22. 1339.	<i>I.R.</i> 385/15. <i>Ib.</i> 303/36.
Wilford, Robert.	Nov. 28, 1347–Jan. 26, 1351.	<i>I.R.</i> 340/15. <i>Ib.</i> 355/27.
Winwick, John.	1340–1355.	<i>M.B.E.</i> 204/90d. ; <i>E.A.</i> 392/12, m. 40d.
Winwick, Philip.	Mar. 5, 1347.	<i>I.R.</i> 339/39.

## SECTION III

## DESCRIPTION AND DIPLOMATIC OF THE PRIVY SEALS

In this section I propose to describe the general features of the documents issued under the privy seal during our period, the

<sup>1</sup> On Dec. 28, 1365, he was described as "lately in the office of the privy seal"; *C.P.R.*, 1364–67, p. 192.

<sup>2</sup> Spelt Newhayl in *E.A.* 376/7, m. 87.

<sup>3</sup> He died in 1392; *C.P.R.*, 1391–96, p. 201.



technical peculiarities of the privy seals themselves, and the methods by which they were affixed.

To enter into a description of the elements of the ordinary writ of privy seal, in any detail, is unnecessary. M. Déprez has explained its features with such lucidity and particularity that it is sufficient to refer to his account, especially as the forms of the privy seal writ are essentially similar to those of the writs issued under the great seal. Normally the writ begins with the recital of the king's title, followed by the address to the official, individual or society to whom the letter is to be dispatched. Sometimes the name and titles of the recipient are set forth at length, with every attribute of dignity and honour. Thus the chancellor, if a bishop, is addressed as "reverent piere en Dieu," if a knight, as "cher et bien ame." As time went on, the business-like informality which distinguished correspondence under the privy seal tended to cut short the purely formal parts of the document, and to approach the question in hand with the least possible delay. This principle of simplification was applied to the concluding formalities of dating as well as to the initial formalities of address. As a rule the writ is specified as "given under our privy seal," with the place of issue and the full date, including the day, the month, and the regnal year.

Gradually the process of abbreviation was pressed so far that from the formal writ there grew the informal bills and letters of privy seal. In the bill the technicalities were reduced to a minimum. Couched, as a rule, in the third person and neither reciting the royal title nor naming the addressee, it was sealed on the face, a little to the right of the final word, and delivered open.<sup>1</sup> Sometimes the bill took the form of an addition to, or endorsement of, a petition from an individual, to which the privy seal was then applied.<sup>2</sup> Only absolute essentials were supplied, and the concluding formulae of dating were often either omitted altogether or so rigidly curtailed, excluding not infrequently even the regnal year, that the assignment of bills to their appropriate chronological place is not easy, but depends largely upon the accessibility of the records of the process in pursuance.

<sup>1</sup> There are good examples of these in *C.W.* 909/16, 17.

<sup>2</sup> *E.g.* Maxwell-Lyte, p. 53, and n. 3; *Exch. of Rec., Warrs. for Issues*, 6/36 (Nov. 21, 1359, 33 Ed. III.).

Bills of privy seal are first found fully developed in the reign of Edward III., but the minimising of formalities was begun much earlier.

Writs and bills alike often bear memoranda at the foot or on the back. These may record when the communication was delivered, and the name of the bearer or of the writer; they may give the gist of the content, or the name of the individual chiefly concerned; they may refer to persons less closely associated with the same matter, or introduce other similar information. Such notes were, of course, usually added after the instrument reached its destination, so that the privy seal office was not generally responsible for them. From 1434, after the fashion of the French chancery, each clerk wrote his surname in the lower right-hand corner of the face of the writs and bills prepared under his supervision. The object of this was, it is thought, to make the clerks responsible for the correctness of the phraseology. At least it suggests that writs and bills were checked before issue.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sir Henry Maxwell-Lyte has drawn attention to this; *op. cit.* p. 34. But, as he was not concerned with the privy seal except in its relation to the great seal and therefore had no occasion to scrutinise closely the privy seals among the *Exchequer of Receipt Warrants for Issues*, he did not observe a phenomenon which caught my attention, and for which I have so far been unable to discover an explanation. This is the appearance of the surnames of privy seal clerks on some of the writs and bills of privy seal addressed to the exchequer between Feb. 2, 1360, and March 3, 1362, that is to say for two years and one month during 34-36 Ed. III. Although the first signed writ I have noticed is dated Feb. 2, 1360, the next is dated Aug. 30, 1360. There is no obvious reason why these particular instruments should have been signed, since they do not differ in form or content from their unsigned contemporaries. If all privy seal writs and bills issued during that period were signed, it would have been a temptation to suggest that intimate contact of privy seal with chancery in France in 1359-60 was responsible. But no privy seal writs and bills sent to chancery had signatures and only a proportion of those sent to exchequer were signed. A personal cause seems no more probable. Keeper Winwick gave place to keeper Buckingham only in May 1360, and Buckingham acted until June 1363, so that it can hardly be a method introduced by a new head of the office, since the practice began before Buckingham was appointed, and was discontinued more than a year before he was removed. Examination of the periods of service of the clerks is no more helpful. Ashton served from 1349 to the end of 1361; Bamburgh, clerk in the privy seal office of the regent, from 1360 to 1361; Dighton from 1356 to 1394; Hilton from 1356 to 1361; Tirrington from 1350 to 1370; Hilton's name appears on no instrument and Bamburgh's on only four. Nor does it seem likely that the innovation was made at the request of the exchequer, because, as we have seen, not all the privy seal warrants directed thither bore a signature. Of the total

The informal letters,<sup>1</sup> of which comparatively few specimens are extant, and those for the reign of Edward III. only, are similar to the contemporary letters of secret seal and signet.<sup>2</sup> The phrase *Depar le roi*, or *per regem*, written *en vedette*, that is to say, in a separate line at the head, prefaces the letter, and a short address to the recipient usually, though by no means always, follows in the next line before the matter of the communication is broached. The concluding formulae generally, though again not without exception, name the seal and set forth the place, day of the month and regnal year of dating. This letter was, as we should naturally expect, closed, and was sealed on the dorse like the writ of privy seal.<sup>3</sup> Sometimes the direction was written on the back of the letter, but usually it was written on the tag, the strip of parchment cut away, except for a fraction of an inch on the left, from the base of the letter, and wrapped round the letter after it had been folded, to secure it. The later letters of privy seal show a distinct tendency to approximate in form to the bill of privy seal. They are still headed *Depar le roi* and retain complete the concluding dating formulae, but they are shorn of address, and usually state the order in the imperative. They are, however, closed like their forerunners, and there is little doubt but that they are really letters, their form being simply a variant of the earlier form.<sup>4</sup>

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of 175 signed writs and bills (*Exch. of Rec., Warr. for Issues*, E404/6/37-42; E404/7/43; E404/10/66), 38 were signed by Ashton, 105 by Dighton, 27 by Tirington and four by Bamburgh. How or why this one-sided temporary anticipation of a habit only formed three-quarters of a century later came about is at present a mystery. Perhaps an even greater curiosity is a privy seal writ, dated Dec. 6, 1361 (E404/6/39), signed Brank. This looks as though Brancaster, a notary attached to chancery, had signed a privy seal writ, but why is neither explained nor clear.

<sup>1</sup> *C.W.* 908, 913; *Exch. of Rec., Warr. for Issues*, 3/18 (July 15, 8 Ed. III.), 4/24 (July 9, 12 Ed. III.), 4/28 (May 16, 15 Ed. III.).

<sup>2</sup> See below, pp. 156, 172, 205.

<sup>3</sup> For some account of the folding and sealing of privy seal writs and letters, see below, pp. 116-120.

<sup>4</sup> *C.W.* 913. I venture to suggest that Sir Henry Maxwell-Lyte is mistaken in classing as bills certain similar instruments issued under secret seal; *op. cit.* p. 109. They are in form exactly like these letters of privy seal, being written in the first person and closed, and are, on Sir Henry's own showing, described by the recipients as letters. The fact that some of the preliminary matter formerly inserted is omitted is hardly, in my opinion, sufficient reason for regarding them as bills.



Despite the striving after compression and precision, writs of privy seal tended to become more elaborate. The early writs, for example, those of the reign of Edward I., are, as a rule, quite small strips of parchment, about 6 or 7 inches long, and 2 inches broad. In the course of Edward III.'s reign the writs of privy seal, like the seal itself, grew steadily larger, and those of the latter part of the fourteenth century are exceedingly impressive and handsome.

The language of the earliest instruments under privy seal is Latin, but French began to be used in the latter part of the reign of Edward I. M. Déprez estimates that about half the surviving Edward II. writs preserved in the chancery are in Latin and the other half in French. It was, perhaps, only natural that the quasi-private correspondence of the illiterate king, who could not even take his coronation oath in Latin, should be drawn up in a tongue which he did understand. But for the reigns of Edward III. and Richard II. French documents are distinctly in the majority, and while this steady growth of the use of French during the fourteenth century mainly indicates an increasing preference for the vernacular as opposed to the clerkly tongue, there is evidence that French was regarded as the appropriate vehicle for the privy seal and its reduplications. It was also considered less solemn and formal, though, upon occasion, used for important enough documents. In 1326, for example, a letter to the Gascons informs them that, to prove to them that the said letter, written in French and sealed with the privy seal, proceeds from Edward II.'s own intention, he has sent a Latin translation sealed with the great seal.<sup>1</sup> No privy seal instruments written in English have been found for our period. The first extant was issued by Henry V. at Vincennes on August 22, 1422, four days before his death.

Let us now examine how writs, and the informal letters, of privy seal were folded and sealed. The methods were partly conditioned by the fact that the seal itself was what is technic-

<sup>1</sup> *Foedera* ii. 632, June 27, "Et ut vobis constat premissa de certa nostra conscientia processisse, mittimus vobis presentes literas nostras in Gallico scriptas sub priuato sigillo nostro, translatas insuper in Latinum sub magno sigillo nostro consignatas."



ally described as “of one piece,” as opposed to the “coin seal” or great seal, with its double matrix and correspondingly doubled impression of obverse and reverse. The privy seal’s reduplications, which we shall soon have to study, were also of this same type, and stand in strong contrast to the reduplications of the great seal, namely, the exchequer seal and the seals of the two benches, all of which, like the great seal itself, were “of two pieces.” To the end of the reign of Edward III. all the seals of state were of two pieces, with the single exception of the privy seal.<sup>1</sup> On the earliest surviving instrument under the privy seal, from the reign of Henry III., there is no impression of the seal, and even for the reign of Edward I. the seal has seldom been preserved. It was affixed to writs and letters on the dorse or back, *plaqué au dos* in the technical language of French students of diplomatic, in the centre when the document was folded in three, to the right of the centre when it was folded in four. Before the seal was applied, there was partially cut from the base of the writ a strip of parchment, the tag, narrow at the junction with the body, broader at the free end. On this the direction was written.<sup>2</sup> The document was then folded, generally horizontally once (or twice) and three (or four) times vertically (the number of folds depended on the size of the parchment, and that primarily depended on the length of the communication). Round this compact little packet the tag was wound and looped in such a way that when the hot wax was poured over it at the point where it crossed itself, and the matrix impressed, the document was closed while the direction on the tag was left adequately exposed. To open, either the tag was cut at the points at which it passed over the lower edge of the document, or else the seal was broken and the tag unwound. The first method was the easier, and was probably the usual one, because it was often desirable to keep the seal as intact as possible,<sup>3</sup> and when the tag was unwound instead of cut, part of

<sup>1</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1369-74, pp. 93-94 (*Rot. Parl.* ii. 460 ; *Foedera*, iii. 868-869).

<sup>2</sup> A good example is in *C.W.* 130/7297, where we read on the well-preserved strip the direction “a mestre Robert de Baldoke, arcediakne de Middl., nostre chancellor, par le roi.”

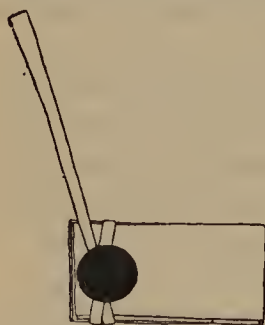
<sup>3</sup> *Anc. Deeds*, WS. 188 (July 2, 1336), and WS. 221 (April 19, 1335), provide good examples of how a writ was opened without touching the seal. The tag, wrapped round and looped through itself, was so cut at the lower edge of the

the middle of the seal would be removed, leaving a blank where it and the tag had been. Until the document had been opened, it was, of course, impossible to know whether the seal would be wanted or not. To protect the seal the better, so it seems, after the document had been opened and it was found necessary or expedient to preserve the seal, the tag, or some other scrap of parchment, was frequently folded and sewn over it.<sup>1</sup>

For some, at present unapparent but probably merely practical, reason, in the late thirties and early forties of the fourteenth century, experiments were made in securing the writs and letters a little differently, with the final result that the older methods were superseded. When the document was folded, a small incision was made in the packet. Through this the tag was first inserted and then wrapped round and looped through itself, the seal being afterwards applied over tag and slit on the extreme right hand of the dorse. Exactly how the document was folded and the tag twisted is difficult to determine, but the accompanying diagrams (see opposite page) probably illustrate the process more or less correctly. The first shows the document folded and slit ready for the tag to be wrapped round. The second shows the document after the tag has been passed through the slit. The third shows the tag looped through itself, and the fourth shows the other side of the document, with the tag looped through

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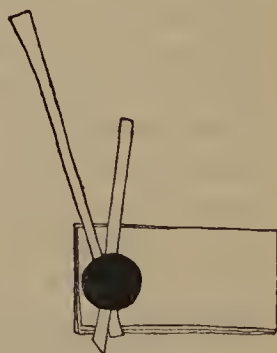
writ as to leave the seal intact imprisoning two strips of tag ; the accompanying diagrams may make this clearer.



Before cutting tag.



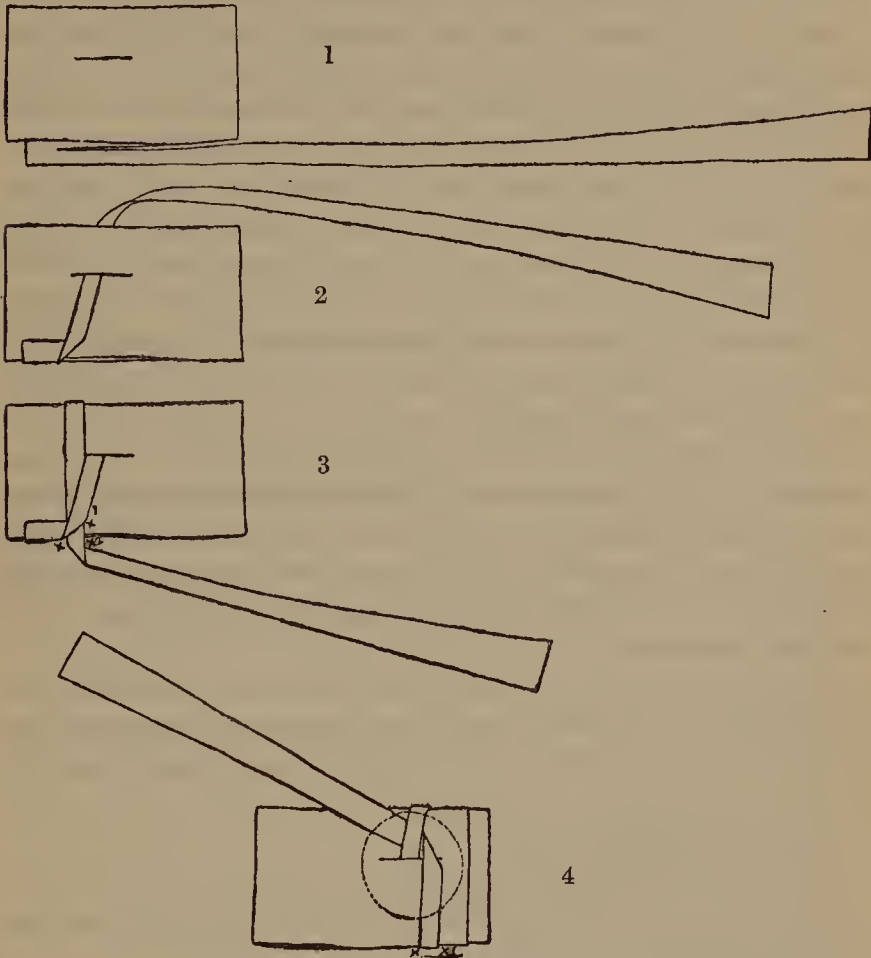
Other side before cutting  
tag at xx and x . . . . x.



After cutting tag.

<sup>1</sup> A good example, out of many, is to be found in *Exch. of Rec., Warr. for Issues*, 5/34 (2nd writ dated July 18, 1355).

itself a second time, ready to receive the wax. The dotted circle in diagram 4 indicates where the seal would be placed. To open, the tag would probably be cut at the points where it was folded and passed round the lower edge of the packet, *i.e.* at  $x \cdots x^1$  and



Diagrams illustrating the folding and securing of closed privy seal instruments after 1346.

$x \cdots x^2$  in diagram 3 and at  $x \cdots x^1$  in diagram 4. The first instrument in which slits are found (four only, as it was not folded over horizontally sufficiently to make a double row of cuts) is dated March 16, 11 Edward III. (1337), but it was so folded as to receive the seal on the immediate right of the centre of the dorse,<sup>1</sup> not over the slit. The first instrument bearing the seal on

<sup>1</sup> *Exch. of Rec., Warr. for Issues*, 3/20.

the extreme right of the dorse is dated May 16, 1341.<sup>1</sup> The new ideas gained favour slowly, it would seem, for it was not until 1346 that they prevailed.<sup>2</sup> The reason for these changes, as we have said, is not immediately obvious. Unlike the changes in fastening and sealing the Black Prince's privy seal instruments, which perhaps synchronised with his adoption of a larger seal,<sup>3</sup> they had nothing to do with any increases in size of the king's privy seal.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, identical methods of securing and sealing were introduced at the same time for instruments under the secret seal, a tiny seal compared with the privy seal,<sup>5</sup> and were also used for instruments under queen Philippa's privy seal.<sup>6</sup> The change in size of the seal had no effect on the size of the parchment used, nor was the larger seal introduced because of any increase in the size of those documents. The changes in securing and sealing seem equally unconnected with increase in size of either document or seal.

The exchequer privy seals, largely mandates for payment addressed to the treasurer and chamberlains of the exchequer, and, to a less extent, the "wardrobe warrants" in the king's remembrancer's accounts, afford a greater proportion of good illustrations of the methods of folding and sealing than do the chancery warrants.

For evidence of privy seal diplomatic, since the privy seal office either did not keep, or did not preserve permanently, any systematic enrolments or registers of outgoing correspondence,

<sup>1</sup> *Exch. of Rec., Warr. for Issues*, 4/28.

<sup>2</sup> See also Maxwell-Lyte, p. 49.

<sup>3</sup> See later, pp. 418-419.

<sup>4</sup> Made in 1338, 1340, 1356, and 1360.

<sup>5</sup> See below, p. 172. *Exch. of Rec., Warr. for Issues*, 4/24 (July 9, 12 Ed. III.), 4/27 (July 5, 14 Ed. III), 5/29, 30.

<sup>6</sup> *Exch. of Rec., Warr. for Issues*, 4/28. A fact which is of considerable interest and may prove to be of vital importance, is that three privy seal writs of queen Isabella, issued in Jan. and Feb. 1317, each have eight slits and bear the seal on the extreme right-hand of the dorse; *Exch. of Rec., Warr. for Issues*, 1/7 (? Jan., Feb. 20, Feb. 24). On two of the writs a fragment of the tag is still imprisoned by the remains of the seal, in such a way as to show that here, at least, the tag was cut and not unwound. The question is, can we argue that these writs are evidence that the methods were initiated by the queen's privy seal officials and then gradually spread to the king's privy seal office? Or, are the writs evidence of nothing more than a passing experiment, revived, or devised independently, later, for instruments under the king's privy seal? Before a decision can be made, we need to find more queen's writs for the years between 1317 and 1337.



we are chiefly dependent upon the surviving privy seal warrants issued to chancery, exchequer and wardrobe, and preserved by exchequer and chancery among their respective archives. So far we have confined our attention exclusively to these warrants, but we know that warranty was not the sole use to which the privy seal was put. From the beginning, documents were issued under the privy seal "in its own right" as it were, and, as we also know, it came to have a wide sphere of "original jurisdiction" which was the larger, and in some ways the more important part of its activity.<sup>1</sup> Unlike the conveniently collected material still extant to bear witness to the warranty work of the privy seal, the evidence for this other branch of its duties, much of it correspondence with powers abroad, is necessarily scattered among the archives of foreign courts and individuals, and to a lesser extent among our own private and corporate muniment collections. Little is to be found in our state archives.<sup>2</sup> Apart from Hoccleve's formulary<sup>3</sup> and one or two other formularies and books of *dictamen* of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, such as are to be found in Edinburgh and Cambridge and the British Museum,<sup>4</sup> the materials for a study of this side of the privy seal's operations are so difficult of access and so widely distributed that the subject requires a separate monograph.

The treatment of the privy seal's original jurisdiction here must inevitably be summary and incomplete. Happily M. Édouard Perroy is engaged in examining and comparing the manuscripts at Edinburgh, Cambridge and the British Museum, and in tracing English privy seal correspondence now lodged in such foreign archives as the Paris, Vatican and Barcelona collections. From his labours important additions to our knowledge

<sup>1</sup> It is noticeable, as we shall realise later, that the signet in Richard II.'s reign also had its own considerable sphere of direct communication.

<sup>2</sup> The P.R.O. *Ancient Deeds* and *Ancient Correspondence* yield something.

<sup>3</sup> *B.M. Ad. MS.* 24,062; see, for some mention of it, above, p. 110.

<sup>4</sup> *B.M. Harl. MS.* 431; *Edinburgh University Library, MS. Laing*, 351 (some of the letters have been published by M. Édouard Perroy in *Le Moyen Âge*, xxix. 255-281, "Charles V et le traité de Brétigny," in 1928); *Cambridge University Library, MS. Dd.* III. 53 (extracts have been published in *Revue Historique*, C. I. p. 51, and *Hansisches Urkundenbuch*, iv. no. 855). Cf. also *B.M. Cotton MS. Cleop.* E. ii. 122, 124, 141; and *B.M. Harl. MS.*, 433, ff. 22-105 (Maxwell-Lyte, pp. 27-28). For all except the first and last B.M. references I have to thank M. Perroy. For other possible privy seal formularies, see *Hist. MSS. Com. Reports*, IV. App. I., pp. 379-397; and below, p. 128, n. 5.

may be expected.<sup>1</sup> That being so, it would be premature for me to attempt to describe the diplomatic of that correspondence. But we have no reason to think that the two branches of the privy seal's activity we have distinguished for convenience to ourselves were marked by any conscious diplomatic differences. We may justifiably suspect that private letters to individuals and to foreign courts, for example, were sealed in the same way as the writs and informal letters sent to chancery and exchequer. As in its warranty business the privy seal did not need to use letters patent, few such are to be found in English state archives. The examples we have, however, suggest that the motive of letters patent under the privy seal was identical with that for letters patent under the great seal, namely, either publicity or permanent preservation or both.

How like, if at all, we may now ask, was privy seal diplomatic to the diplomatic of the great seal? Before we can attempt an answer, it will be as well to review, summarily, what we know of the methods of folding and sealing documents to which the great seal was affixed. Rules almost as rigid as those of the French chancery,<sup>2</sup> though not quite so logically carried out, guided the English chancery. The most solemn documents, such as charters, were sealed with the great seal pendant, attached to the parchment by plaited silk cords, the *lacs de soie* or *cordelettes* of the French chancery, inserted through holes in the parchment at the centre of the base, which was folded over horizontally for a short length to give greater strength.<sup>3</sup> Less solemn documents had the pendant seal attached by what the French call a *double queue*,

<sup>1</sup> M. Perroy has been kind enough to supply me with a *précis* of the *Edinburgh MS. Laing* 351 (to which he has added some notes bearing on its relation to the *Cambridge MS. Dd. III. 53*). As he has already said in print (*Le Moyen Âge*, xxix. 255, n. 1), the compilation is of the late fourteenth century, some of the documents transcribed belonging to the time of Edward III., but most of them to the period of Edmund Stafford's keepership of the privy seal in the reign of Richard II. It would be an unwarrantable anticipation of M. Perroy's results to say more here than that the collection contains much correspondence sent to and from foreign courts, as well as other letters and writs of original and warrant force, and that such documents were selected as well for their literary merit and political importance as for their utility in furnishing precedents and formulae for future guidance and use.

<sup>2</sup> For these rules, see Morel, *La Grande Chancellerie Royale, 1328-1400*.

<sup>3</sup> The use of silken cords for charters began in England with Henry II.; C. H. Hunter-Blair's *Durham Seals*, p. xxvii. I have found Mr. Hunter-Blair's elaborate treatise of the greatest use in the story of the seals. It is generally referred to as *Durham Seals*.

that is to say, a band of parchment inserted through a cut made in the centre base of the document and doubled into a loop before receiving the wax for the seal. Many letters patent were sealed in this way. Documents of minor importance had the pendant seal attached differently. A strip of parchment, the tag or tongue, was partly cut off from the base of the document from right to left in such a fashion that it remained attached to it on the left-hand side while it was loose on the right. From this a second strip, the tie, was similarly cut, and almost entirely severed, to be used to bind up the whole neatly after sealing for safety during transit. Or the narrow strip may have been cut first and the broader one second. This is immaterial, for the result was the same. To the loose end of the broad strip, the seal was applied. This method, described by the French as sealing *en simple queue*, was the commonest way of sealing letters patent.<sup>1</sup> The direction was usually written on the back of the folded document.

How letters close, and incidentally writs, issued under the great seal were sealed, is a vexed question. One method is illustrated by surviving examples of judicial writs "plied for the seal" but apparently never actually sealed and issued. From the base of the parchment a strip was cut from right to left to within an inch, more or less, of the left side, just as if the document were being prepared for sealing open *en simple queue*. Then the document was folded horizontally and rolled tightly vertically to make a small neat spool. Round this the partly severed tag or tongue was wrapped and looped through itself to secure the package. To the tongue, as near to the spool as possible, the wax was applied on both sides and the seal impressed, so as to prevent opening without either cutting off the tongue or smashing the seal and scraping away enough of the wax to allow the tongue to be drawn back through its loop. The direction was written on the tongue towards the free end.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Maxwell-Lyte, p. 300. Mr. H. E. Salter in *Cartulary of the Hospital of St. John the Baptist, Oxford*, ii. 410 (Oxford Hist. Soc.), gives an interesting diagram of the folding of letters patent sealed *en simple queue*. His specimen is not a "writ close," as his reviewer in *E.H.R.* xxxi. 526 says. It calls itself a letter patent, it was left open, and it was enrolled on the patent roll.

<sup>2</sup> These problems are discussed at much length in Maxwell-Lyte, pp. 302-306; cf. his frontispiece, fig. 5. See also *E.H.R.* xxxvii. (1922), pp. 269-272, where, in the course of a review, Mr. C. G. Crump states briefly his views on the question of how the great seal was applied to letters close.



No evidence has yet been brought together which would settle the question whether the more elaborate correspondence under the great seal, with foreign courts and with individuals, sent close, was sealed in the same way. There is, moreover, no getting away from the fact that some letters close were purposely left open, being sealed then, usually, *en simple queue*. When such were enrolled, the memorandum *et erat patens* was often, but not invariably, added at the end of the enrolment. A document addressed to one, or several, showing all the diplomatic formulae of a letter close, was sealed open either because the instructions it contained were to be followed in every recurrence of the conditions with which they dealt, so that the seal must be kept comparatively intact in order to prove the letter's validity,<sup>1</sup> or else because the matter was to be published more or less broadcast, when again an unbroken seal was necessary to show adequate authority for the publication.<sup>2</sup> A letter was

<sup>1</sup> For an example, see *C.C.R.*, 1341-43, p. 131, a letter dated May 1, 1341, and addressed to the prioress and convent of Amesbury. Cf. *Exch. of Rec.*, *Warr. for Issues*, 6/41, a document dated May 10, 1361. See also the references in n. 1, p. 126 below.

<sup>2</sup> I think that the "libellus famosus" of 1341, issued under the great seal, is a case in point (see above, iii. 128). Each letter, dated either Feb. 10 or 12, was addressed to one individual or to a small group of people, and the enrolment of the letter sent to the bishop of London, with a memorandum as to how many others received a similar letter, was made in the close roll. The letter sent to the dean and chapter of Exeter can still be seen, with part of the seal adhering (*Chapter of Exeter MSS.* v. c. iv. no. 2227), and a few years ago I examined it. It seemed to me then, that although like the enrolment of the letter addressed to the bishop of London it showed all the diplomatic formulae of the ordinary letter close under the great seal, it had been sealed open "en simple queue." I therefore drew the conclusion that, while the "libellus famosus" had been written in the form of a letter close, it had been sealed like a letter patent, because it was to be given wide publicity, although the memorandum "et erat patens" had not been made at the end of the enrolment. But when I was reconstructing this section in 1929, I began to doubt whether I had been justified in my conclusion. So, at my request, Dr. B. Wilkinson was kind enough to look at the Exeter letter for me and to supply me with certain particulars. Later in the same year, when passing through Exeter, Miss Broome also took the opportunity of seeing it (here I should like to thank the Rev. H. E. Bishop, librarian of the chapter library, for the kindly facilities he gave to both Miss Broome and Dr. Wilkinson). We are all three agreed that the Exeter letter was sealed patent. The whole document measures  $17\frac{3}{8}" \times 16\frac{3}{8}"$ . The tongue is  $11\frac{1}{8}" \times 1\frac{3}{4}"$  (roughly, the parchment was not cut evenly), and  $1\frac{1}{4}"$  were doubled back underneath from the free end before the wax was applied. The size of the fragment of wax still left is about  $2\frac{1}{4}" \times 1\frac{3}{4}"$ . The length of tongue between its root and the left-hand edge of the seal when perfect (the impression can quite clearly be made out) measured  $8\frac{1}{4}"$ . That is to say, only  $2\frac{3}{8}"$  of the



by nature a closed communication, and in the beginning closed communications under the double-faced great seal seem always to have been so sealed as to necessitate the destruction of the seal in opening. But since, for certain reasons with which we are familiar, it was sometimes desirable to have an unbroken seal, the device was adopted of keeping the letter open, and sealing it in one or other of the two ways we have just described.<sup>1</sup> In explanation of this procedure the clause "In evidence of which we have caused these our letters to be made patent" was inserted in conclusion. Thus, the essential differences between letters patent and letters close are that the patents contained this special clause and were normally addressed to everybody, being of public, general, permanent or recurrent application,

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tongue were covered by the seal, which projected beyond the end of the folded tongue from just below the arm of the enthroned figure. On the face of the tongue, immediately below the cut from the body of the letter, is the direction "Decano et capitulo Exonie per regem de pupplicando." Only the word "decano" remained uncovered after the application of the seal, and the last word of the sentence extends over the folded part of the tongue. (I have noticed only one letter patent with a direction on the tongue, namely, one under griffin seal; *C.W.* 1337/22.) On the dorse of the letter, 3" from the left side, at right angles to the lower edge, is the direction "Decano et capitulo Exonie." On the dorse of the tongue, 5½" from the root, at right angles to the edges, in no danger of being covered by the wax, was written "littera regis ad prosequendum versus episcopum Cantuariensem in quibus (sic) continetur manda remanda modicum ibi prius (?) in pera serpens in gremio, etc." The roughness of the edge of the lower left corner of the document, for 1½", suggests that a tie may once have been present. My final conclusion, therefore, is that the "libellus famosus" was drafted as a letter close and was intended to be sealed close, but that when it came to be made up ready for sealing, in view of the fact that the contents were to be made public, it was decided to seal the letter open. The absence of the note "et erat patens" from the enrolment lends point to this argument, for the enrolment would be made before the letter was engrossed; had the decision to seal it open been made in the first instance, the fact would no doubt have been recorded as in the normal way. All these letters issued in Feb. 1341 were in Latin and were sealed with the great seal, but on March 4, 1341, duplicates were issued in French under the privy seal. That addressed to the bishop of London is enrolled on the same close roll as the earlier letter under great seal directed to him, with the marginal "Quedam littera missa diuersis prelati Anglie contra archiepiscopum Cantuariensem"; *Close Roll*, 168/38d. No one has yet noticed this, as far as I am aware, and although the calendarer has indicated that the second group of letters were in French, he has not pointed out that they were sealed with the privy seal; *C.C.R.*, 1341-43, p. 113. That a letter issued from the privy seal office could still be enrolled on the close roll of chancery in 1341 is of considerable interest. It forges one more link in the chain of proof against the privy seal having kept any systematic enrolment or register of correspondence.

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 122-123.

whereas the closed letters contained no clause specifying the manner of their make-up, were addressed to one person or to a certain group of individuals, being of private, restricted or temporary interest. Therefore, in essence, the patent rolls are rolls in which letters described as made "patent" and addressed *omnibus* or *uniuersis et singulis* are enrolled, the close rolls are rolls in which letters to individuals, ordinary closed correspondence, were enrolled. But we cannot say that any one method of sealing ought to be used solely for any one form of document, for, as we have just seen, some of those addressed to individuals have more than a passing significance and required unassailable proof of their authenticity. Nor can any fixed differentiation of acts be based on the make-up.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, in process of time, sharp distinctions became somewhat blurred from motives of practical convenience, though, in general, instruments were still divided after the old fashion into charters, letters patent and letters close. The only difference, as the fourteenth century grew older, was that the highly formal charter was used comparatively rarely, and much business that earlier would have given rise to a charter was transacted by letters patent. Finally the charter became obsolete, although the letter patent, which took its place, was popularly called a charter, as it is to the present day.

The effect of such modifications was that the original subdivision of non-charter documents into letters patent and close lost something of its meaning. The multiplicity of enrolments tended in the same direction. When documents were enrolled together for local reasons, as in the Gascon, French and Roman rolls, or because they had some particular motive, as in the fine rolls or the liberate rolls, inevitably patent and close documents were enrolled in the same roll. We must remember, too, that the chancery had no equivalent to the memoranda rolls of the exchequer. It therefore entered in its enrolments of outgoing correspondence, not only notes of various proceedings within the office, but also copies of some of the communications received,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Maxwell-Lyte, pp. 306, 392. My statements in earlier volumes must be modified in accordance with these my later conclusions.

<sup>2</sup> For example, recognisances, indentures, transferences of the great seal from one chancellor or keeper to another, writs and letters of privy seal and

just as officials of the receipt of the exchequer in the same way sometimes used the issue and receipt rolls to record events and transactions having nothing to do with either receipts or issues.

Moreover, some sections of chancery developed a language of their own which cut across the traditional use of the office. Thus, the hanaper department, whose business it was to give out writs and receive the appropriate fees, classified documents according to the fees payable for them. Since letters close, in the nature of things, did not require the payment of a fee for their sealing, the hanaper took no cognisance of them. It regarded instruments as "charters of the great fee," "charters of the little fee" and simple "writ," and in one year took fees for 399 "charters," 34 of the "great" and 365 of the "little fee." The charter roll of this year only recorded 62 "charters." Clearly "charter" meant one thing to the hanaper, and something rather different to the department of the rolls.<sup>1</sup>

No real analogy existed between the methods used for sealing with the great seal and those used for sealing with the privy seal, despite the fact that letters patent under the privy seal, of course, followed the universal way of sealing letters patent, namely, either *en simple queue* or *en double queue*.<sup>2</sup> But one inconvenience inevitably attended the pendant use of the privy seal. A pendant seal postulated a stamp on each side of the hanging mass of wax. The counter-seal, the impression on the reverse side of the wax, made it more difficult to tamper with the document without detection. The privy seal, having no counterseal, when used pendant had to have the reverse left blank, though usually it was roughly rounded by finger prints, or neatly moulded into a sort of truncated cone.<sup>3</sup> Three examples at least, of original letters patent under the privy seal are in the

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even ordinances. But enrolment in the close roll did not make of the "libellus famosus" issued a second time under privy seal a letter close under the great seal (*C.C.R.*, 1341-43, p. 113; see above, p. 124, n. 2) nor did it convert the Walton ordinances sent to the chancellor along with a writ of privy seal (*C.C.R.*, 1337-39, p. 525; above, iii. 143) into letters close under the great seal.

<sup>1</sup> See for this, my "Household of the Chancery" and the references there given, in *Essays in History presented to R. L. Poole*, pp. 71-72.

<sup>2</sup> I have not seen an example of letters patent under the privy seal with the seal attached by *lacs de soie*; cf. Maxwell-Lyte, p. 390.

<sup>3</sup> *B.M. Harl. Ch.* 43. B. 8 furnishes an admirable example, as do many of the privy seals in the P.R.O.



British Museum,<sup>1</sup> and a number of the original privy seals in the Public Record Office are also letters patent. Of these we may specially point out four.<sup>2</sup> To them may be added two indentures under privy seal in the British Museum.<sup>3</sup> Among the most famous of "indentures under privy seal" was the copy of the treaty of London of 1359 sent to France.<sup>4</sup> It is no longer extant, but from it all known texts of that treaty have been derived.<sup>5</sup> Marked differences, on the other hand, are to be observed with regard to letters close. I have nowhere seen a letter of privy seal sealed after the manner of letters close under the great seal.<sup>6</sup> The privy seal, being of one piece, was normally *plaqué au dos*. All the writs and closed letters of privy seal I have examined have the seal applied thus on the dorse. Also, since the privy seal was so much smaller than the great

<sup>1</sup> i. *Harl. Ch.* 43. B. 8, "ad recipiendum ad pacem omnes homines de Moravia qui ad pacem venire voluerunt." It is dated Aberdeen, July 18, 1296, "sub priuato sigillo nostro," and contains the usual patent formula "in cuius rei testimonium has litteras nostras fieri fecimus patentēs."

ii. *Ad. Ch.* 11,307, dated before Calais, March 6, 1347. These are both mentioned by Déprez, *Études de diplomatie anglaise*, pp. 48-51, who summarises the former and transcribes the latter.

iii. *L.F.C.* iii. 19, "Edward . . . a touz conestables et leur tenantz, etc. . . . en pais de Uluester," dated March 10, 1370.

<sup>2</sup> *Ancient Deeds*, WS. 642; A. 3256; A. 15105; WS. 630. The seals still attached to these documents are discussed, and the last two are reproduced, below, pp. 138-140, 141-142 and n. 1, and Appendix, plate II. no. 3, plate III. no. 1.

<sup>3</sup> *Ad. Ch.* 7378, and *Harl. Ch.* 43. E. 39. I have not seen any charters issued under the privy seal; cf. below, pp. 129-130.

<sup>4</sup> Cosneau, *Les Grands Traités de la Guerre de Cent Ans*, pp. 31-32, "En tesmoing desquelles choses en cestes lectres endentées, demorant dans la dicte partie de France, le roy d'Angleterre a fait mectre son scel priué." It is clear from the text of the treaty that the reason for using the privy seal was the strong desire of all parties to the agreement to keep it private.

<sup>5</sup> In addition to the two texts M. Cosneau has used, one of the fourteenth century and the other of the seventeenth century (*op. cit.* pp. 2-3), there is a third, of the fourteenth century. This copy of the treaty, the only one in England as far as I know, is in a collection of letters and memoranda (compiled, I am disposed to think, in the privy seal office) once among Lord Leconfield's muniments (*Hist. MSS. Com. Reports*, VI. p. 301, no. 25). Through the instrumentality of Mr. C. Johnson and the kindness of Dr. F. Bock, who was generously permitted to use the MS. by the bookseller in whose possession it recently was, Miss Broome has been able to look over the MS. and in the process noted this treaty. Mr. Johnson pointed out that it also contains a copy of the treaty of Guines, or Calais, of 1354, the text of which seems otherwise quite unknown. The MS. has now been purchased by the John Rylands Library (it is classified as *Rylands Latin MS.* 404). [See *E.H.R.* xlv. 353-372].

<sup>6</sup> See above, pp. 123-126.



seal, the whole seal was used for all classes of documents, whereas motives of economy led to the use of a part only of the great seal, such as the "half seal" or even less, on certain writs.<sup>1</sup> A further difference in the use of the two seals is illustrated by the unique form of the bill of privy seal, already described.<sup>2</sup> The many references in wardrobe accounts afford an easy way of showing how far from uncommon were letters close and patent under the privy seal.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to the normal uses of the privy seal, use was sometimes made of it in an emergency in place of the great seal.<sup>4</sup> Such emergencies only arose when the king and the great seal were so widely separated that no reliance could be placed on a writ of privy seal reaching chancery in time for an instrument under great seal to be issued. They became more frequent when the chancery ceased to follow the court. This was one of the considerations which led to the subdivision of the administration into two self-sufficing sections, each with the appropriate seals, when Edward III. was out of his kingdom on campaigns or other business. Generally, documents so sealed with the privy seal were of minor importance. There is, for instance, no evidence of charters having been issued under the privy seal even in exceptional circumstances. A group of documents said to have been sealed "in the form of charters" with the privy seal while Edward I. was in Scotland, were not real charters. Edward was anxious to make provision for the three children of his second wife, Margaret of France, and on August 31, 1306,

<sup>1</sup> Maxwell-Lyte, pp. 304-309, 348. The possibility of sealing with the great seal "plaqué au dos" must not be overlooked. Dr. Broome has called my attention to several files of *Exch. of Rec., Warr. for Issues* (E404/7/44, 47, 48 especially) which contain many chancery writs bearing traces of yellowish white wax on the extreme right hand of the dorse.

<sup>2</sup> See above, pp. 113-114; cf. below, p. 173, for notice of similar bills of secret seal.

<sup>3</sup> See for instance *MS. Tanner*, 197/59, which records on March 14, 1311, the payment "Johanni de Tunstal, nuncio, deferenti litteras regis sub priuato sigillo, unum videlicet patentem et alium clausum, domino H. de Godard, tenenti locum justiciarii North Wallie." Compare *MS. Ad.* 8835, f. 103, "Galfredo de Badeneye, nuncio, deferenti vi litteras clausas sub priuato sigillo." Gross, *Select Cases on the Law Merchant*, i. 76, Selden Soc., instances a "letter patent under secret seal" of 1300, ordering all persons to deliver to the keeper of the great wardrobe the wares he may desire. In 1300 "secret seal" in all probability means "privy seal."

<sup>4</sup> Maxwell-Lyte, pp. 20, 389-390.

three letters were drawn up "sealed in the form of charters by the king's command, by writ of the targe."<sup>1</sup> They were "sent to the chancellor out of Scotland" and were then, according to the memorandum on the patent roll, "sealed with the great seal in the above form (*i.e.* in the form of letters patent), and the said charters under the targe were sent to the wardrobe under the chancellor's seal." Thus, documents drafted in court under the privy seal were later issued as letters patent under the great seal and were enrolled in the patent roll, the privy seal documents afterwards being sent for safe custody to the wardrobe. The expression *selees en forme de chartres* clearly means nothing more than that the original documents sent from Scotland under the privy seal were sealed open or patentwise.<sup>2</sup>

Another difference between sealing with the privy seal and sealing with the great seal was in the colour of the wax used. Each office, in fact, had its distinctive colour or colours, and in chancery the quality of the act was indicated not only by the fashion of the sealing but also by the colour of the wax on which the matrix was impressed. Green wax was used on all exchequer writs,<sup>3</sup> and green and white wax were used by the chancery of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries according to the importance of the document. Sealing with silken cords required green wax, or wax coloured with *verdigris*, "Greek green," the sign

<sup>1</sup> Targe was, of course, another name for the privy seal; see above, ii. 283-284, 324-325.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. above, p. 127, for the meaning of the word charter to the hanaper. See also *C.P.R.*, 1301-1307, p. 460; and Maxwell-Lyte, p. 42. The original text, from *P.R.* 34 Edw. I. m. 10 (C.66/127), runs as follows: "Fet a remembrer qe totes les lettres susecrites furent enuees au chaunceler hors Descoce, selees en forme de chartres, et par comaundement le roi par bref de la targe e puis furent selees du grant seal en la forme susecrite, e les dites chartes (sic) suz la targe furent enuees a la garderobe, desuz le seal le chaunceler."

<sup>3</sup> Matthew Paris testifies to this; *Hist. Major*, v. 720, "Institutus tunc dominus Thomas de Wymundham . . . thesaurarius ad scaccarium, ubi consignantur brevia de viridi cera." For later testimony see *Mirror of Justices*, pp. 36-7 (Selden Soc.): "En cel place (*i.e.* del eschequere) estoit assigne i seale i gardien pur fer ent aquitaunce de chescun paiement qe avoir le voleit e sealer les brefs e les estretes souz cire vert." See also Wright's *Political Songs*, p. 151 (Camden Soc.), "Greythe me selver to the grene wax," and p. 152, "Ther the grene wax greveth under gore." In the Irish exchequer green wax was also used; see *C.P.R.*, 1388-92, p. 387, confirmation of a grant to Robert Eure, under the Irish great seal, of the office of the chancellor of the green wax of the exchequer of Ireland. In the exchequer of Chester both green and uncoloured wax were used, and this latter was not specially reserved for "chancery" business, the exchequer being also the chancery; see later, Ch. XVIII. § 2.

of perpetuity.<sup>1</sup> For letters sealed *en simple queue* white wax was always used, the white generally being yellowish in tinge. Letters sealed *en double queue* were usually sealed with white wax, occasionally with green. Letters close and most writs were probably normally sealed with white wax. The privy seal, on the other hand, used only red wax.

Wardrobe accounts and issue rolls alike record purchases of white or green wax for the chancery,<sup>2</sup> green wax for the exchequer, and red wax for the wardrobe and small seals.<sup>3</sup> The evidence of the innumerable impressions of the privy seal, surviving intact or in fragments, shows that, in fact, red was the invariable privy seal colour. Red wax was always used for documents emanating from the wardrobe, and for the writs of the secret, the griffin, the signet, and the other varieties of small seals which grew up during the fourteenth century.<sup>4</sup> Red was also the colour of the wax used for the privy seals of the queen,<sup>5</sup> of the king's sons, of the magnates, lay and ecclesiastical, and of the great ecclesiastical corporations.<sup>6</sup> Nor was it in England only that red wax was used for small seals. One of the innumerable points of resemblance between English and French official methods of the fourteenth century is that red wax was nearly always employed for the French *sceau du secret* and invariably for the French

<sup>1</sup> Richard I. was the first king who habitually used green for solemn charters. See *Durham Seals*, p. xxiii.

<sup>2</sup> See, for instance, *L.Q.G.* (28 Edw. I.), p. 359, "Eodem domino Willelmo pro m<sup>lv</sup> lib. cere albe emptis, preter illas cxij lib. cere, quas habuit de domino Radulpho de Stoke, clerico magne garderobe regis, pro cera viridi et viridi greca ad ceram viridem faciendam, emptis similiter per eundem pro brevibus clausis et patentibus ac etiam cartis diversimodis per tempus predictum consignandis, xxxij li xix s. ij d. et ob." White wax, used for the mass of writs, was bought in bulk. Green wax was either purchased in small quantities, ready coloured, or "Greek green" was bought and mixed with white wax to give it a green colour. For the white wax of the normal writ of chancery, compare *Mirror of Justices*, p. 158, "Abusion est qe les ministres del eschecqere eient jurisdiction dautre chose qe des deners le roi . . . saunz bref originall de la chauncellerie souz blanche cire."

<sup>3</sup> A few instances at random may be given. "Pro factura xij librarum cere rubeæ pro priuato sigillo regis, vi s."; *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 201/8d. "Pro cera rubea, incausto et aliis necessariis pro priuato sigillo"; *I.R.* 409/7. Compare *ib.* 417/5; *Chanc. Misc.* IV/3, 5.

<sup>4</sup> See, for these reduplications of the privy seal, later, Ch. XVII.

<sup>5</sup> *Add. MS.* 35,294, f. 613, "cerea rubea empta ad priuatum sigillum domine regine." See also Ch. XVIII.

<sup>6</sup> For instances of the latter see *Durham Seals*, p. xxii. For others see later, Ch. XVIII. Vermilion was used to colour wax red.



signets.<sup>1</sup> The most distinguished of all European small seals, the papal "fisherman's ring," was also applied to red wax.<sup>2</sup> The methods of administration were the same all over western Europe.

The matrix of the privy seal, from its size and nature, was much less costly to make than those of the greater two-faced seals. A few illustrations, taken from royal and other small seals, will make this clear. In 1306 the cost of material and manufacture of a privy seal in gold, made by William de Kele, goldsmith of London, for Edward I.'s second queen, Margaret of France, was only sixty-five shillings.<sup>3</sup> Simon de Kele, another member of the same family of London goldsmiths, was paid 100 shillings for casting a certain seal for the new king in the early months of Edward II.'s reign. The small cost, and the fact that the wardrobe "burdened itself" with that cost, suggest that this seal was Edward II.'s new privy seal,<sup>4</sup> did not a later entry show it to be the small "seal of absence," made for use while the king went to Boulogne to be married.<sup>5</sup> This seems to have been much the same type as the seal of Lionel of Antwerp, keeper of England in 1347,<sup>6</sup> and as that of Thomas, the king's

<sup>1</sup> Morel, *op. cit.* pp. 251, 254. M. Morel's only instances to the contrary are of two charters of 1384 and 1385, each sealed by both great and secret seal, and both of green wax.

<sup>2</sup> Giry, p. 654.

<sup>3</sup> *E.A.* 369/11, f. 58d. "Willelmo de Kele, aurifabro Londonensi, pro quodam sigillo priuato auri facto per eundem pro domina regina in precio x denariorum auri de moneta regis Francie ponderantium iiij s. auri liberatorum eidem pro eodem sigillo et pro factura eiusdem, quolibet denario valente vi s. et vj d. sterling, apud Westmonasterium, xiiij. die Oct. anno eodem—lxvjs."

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* 373/15, f. 2. "Et idem dominus Walterus (Reginaldi) in indentura sua fatetur se recepisse c s. de scaccario pro denariis prius liberatis Simoni de Kele, aurifabro Londonensi, super quodam sigillo regis fundendo, quos tamen denarios non recepit in scaccario, set quia garderoba ponit dictos denarios in exitu super dictum Simonem, ideo dicta garderoba gratis se onerat de eisdem."

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* m. 46, "Simoni de Keyles, de prestito ad fundendum pro quodam sigillo faciendo ad regimen regni Anglie dum dominus rex fuerit extra regnum Anglie, et super facturam eiusdem sigilli per manus proprias apud Lond. quarto decimo die Januarii, c s." However, in the wardrobe account of 1 Edw. II., in *Pipe*, 16 *Edw. II.* 168/50, is an entry "unacum denariis solutis pro emendacione parui sigilli regis, ipso in partibus transmarinis existente." See also in *ib.* the entry "Simoni de Kele, aurifabro Londonensi, de prestito super quodam nouo sigillo fundendo et faciendo pro regno Anglie et alterius sigilli parui de una pecia pro comitatu Pontiuui, xiiij li."

<sup>6</sup> *I.R.* 339/35, "pro fabricatione sigilli Lyonelli, custodis Anglie."



son, keeper in England in 1360, which cost only 66s. 8d.<sup>1</sup> Under Edward III. a privy seal, provided in 1340, was not completely paid for till 1346, when the balance of £5 was disbursed.<sup>2</sup> William Morton, goldsmith of London, received £3 in August 1356 for "making a certain seal for the king,"<sup>3</sup> and in December of the same year John Chichester, goldsmith of London, was paid £8 for making a privy seal.<sup>4</sup> Later an additional expense was incurred, as for example in 1362, when that same John Chichester received, on June 3, 32s. 6d. for making a chain for the privy seal and for the weight of the silver found by him for enlarging the said chain.<sup>5</sup> Variations in price may be explained by the increasing size of the seal. They were also influenced later by the fact that gold came to be used for the matrix instead of silver. Under Edward III. the privy seal and its chain were always made of silver, but as time went on the more precious metal seems to have been preferred. Thus, under Henry IV., a "privy seal of gold with a chain and riddle, two verges long," cost the king's chamber £10, while "a pair of great seals in gold" cost in the same reign £50.<sup>6</sup>

Now let us describe the various known privy seals of our period.<sup>7</sup> We have seen that the history of the privy seal begins under John, though such an instrument was possibly in existence under Henry II.<sup>8</sup> Unluckily we have no certain knowledge of the nature of John's privy seal, though it has been plausibly suggested that it was the same as the counter seal inscribed

<sup>1</sup> *I.R.* 400/17.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* 336/25, "Johanni de Taunton de London, in persolucionem o solidorum sibi liberandorum pro factura priuati sigilli regis"; a discharge in 1346 of a mandate of Easter term, 1340.

<sup>3</sup> See below, p. 140, n. 2.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *I.R.* 411/20, "tam pro factura cathene priuati sigilli domini regis quam pro pondere argenti per ipsum pro elargacione dicte cathene inuento"; cf. Devon, *u.s.* p. 177. Yet when, in 1363, Buckingham, on leaving office, delivered his seal to the chancellor to be deposited in the exchequer, it was "sine catena," *Kal. and Inv. Exch.* i. 200. A chain of gold bought of Chichester for the secret seal cost £10:6:8; *I.R.* 384/4. The weight of the chain was that of sixteen Florentine nobles.

<sup>6</sup> *Rot. Parl.* iv. 312.

<sup>7</sup> Specimens are reproduced in the Appendix to this volume.

<sup>8</sup> See above, i. 150-157, 147-150.

*secretum Johannis* which John used before he became king.<sup>1</sup> Neither do we possess surviving specimens of the privy seal of Henry III., though we know that it was a shield of arms with the "circumscription" of the seal of the exchequer,<sup>2</sup> though the meaning of the "circumscription" is obscure.<sup>3</sup> We know also that it was made of silver and that, though the seal itself had disappeared thirty years after Henry's death, the purse of silk in which it had been kept still survived among the treasures in Edward I.'s wardrobe.<sup>4</sup> We are, therefore, forced to begin our description with the seal of Edward I., though our scanty information suggests that the unknown earliest seals were of the same type as their known successors. Of these we have a complete series from the reign of Edward I.

Students of diplomatic tell us that the size of the seal was an index to the importance of the act sealed with it, or of the owner.<sup>5</sup> If this be true, and in some measure, at least, it is, the importance of the English privy seal grew steadily between the reigns of Edward I. and Richard II., since at each demise of the crown, and at nearly every other change of the seal, the seal tended to be made a size larger. The normal size of Edward I.'s privy seal was about 1 inch, or 25 mm., in diameter, though smaller impressions of 23 or 24 mm. are not uncommon. The seal was a "seal of arms," representing on a shield the three leopards of England. Along the border was the inscription SECRETUM REGIS EDWARDI.<sup>6</sup> It was suspended on a chain of silver.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is the suggestion of Mr. Hunter-Blair in his *Durham Seals*, p. xxxi. This "secretum" is figured in *ib.* plate F. No. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Foedera*, i. 244, "breuia vero nostra de scaccario sigillabuntur interim quodam priuato sigillo cum quodam scuto de armis nostris cum circumscriptione sigilli de scaccario" (1242).

<sup>3</sup> See above, i. 241.

<sup>4</sup> *L.Q.G.* p. 351, "Una bursa de serico que est in uno forcero de corio, que bursa billata est in hunc modum: Istam bursam dedit regi electus sancti Augustini." "Et in eadem bursa fuit *sigillum argenti secretum*, quod fuit regis Henrici, patris regis Edwardi." Perhaps the seal itself was stolen by the burglars of the wardrobe treasury in 1303 and never recovered; see above, i. 290.

<sup>5</sup> Douët d'Arcq, *op. cit.* I. xxiii. "En thèse générale, la grandeur du sceau indique son importance."

<sup>6</sup> Examples (a) *B.M. Harl. Ch.* 43. B. 8, July 18, 1296, described above; cf. *Durham Seals*, plate E. 4: (b) *P.R.O. Museum* (Case H, 76 A), *Exch. of Rec., Warr. for Issues*, 1/2: (c) *E.A.* 368/15, 7, dated Lanercost, Oct. 30, 1306.

<sup>7</sup> This cost 3s. in 1297, when it was delivered to keeper Benstead; Maxwell-Lyte, p. 41. For the seal see below, Appendix, plate I. no. 1.

The earliest privy seals of Edward II. are about the same size as those of his father, and average 24 mm., though full specimens run to 25 mm. These seals, however, are not strictly royal privy seals, for we are expressly told that these early letters were *sigillate priuato sigillo quo utebatur antequam regni nostri gubernaculum suscepimus*.<sup>1</sup> They were, in fact, really stamped with Edward's privy seal as prince of Wales. This was a "seal of arms" representing the three leopards of England with a label of three points. The inscription seems to have been LE SEEL EDWARD KI USE EN GARD, that is, "the seal of Edward which he uses in the wardrobe."<sup>2</sup> There is a writ thus sealed of so late a date as August 25, 1307. However, from that day Edward II. had a proper privy seal. As Edward I. died on July 7, it must have taken about fifty days to get a new seal ready and send it to the young king in Scotland. This seal was identical with that of his father in inscription and in the arms on the shield, but it was somewhat larger, 28 mm. in diameter instead of 25 mm., and the shield was slightly wider, 13-14 mm. instead of 12-13 mm.<sup>3</sup> How long it remained in use is not clear, for, although the privy seal seems to have been recovered after each of the two occasions on which it was lost,<sup>4</sup> by November 1316 another privy seal matrix had superseded this first one. It is, therefore, just possible that the loss of the seal at Bannockburn involved the casting of a new one. The second matrix had the same diameter as the first, and the same arms and legend, but the shield was an

<sup>1</sup> C.W. 56/5684.

<sup>2</sup> E.A. 370/10 gives the best example I have found, but it is very brittle and badly crumbled. The inscription is not very complete, but seems to run: LE: SEE[L[ [E]DW(A)RD: K(I[VSE]EN) GARD. But perhaps KI EST EN GARD is a better reading. When I first examined the seal, nearly twenty years ago, only the letters I have put in square brackets were missing; now those I have put in curved brackets are also lacking. See below, App., plate I. no. 2. The illiterate prince had a French inscription on his seal, but French was already the normal tongue of the privy seal office. The royal type of "secretum" was imitated very extensively, and to most persons their "secretum" was their only seal. Thus Ingelard Warley, keeper of the wardrobe 1309-14, had a seal inscribed SECRETUM INGELARDI DE WARLEY; *Exch. of Rec. Wardrobe Debentures, etc.*, E. 404/481.

<sup>3</sup> There is an excellent impression in *Anc. Deeds*, WS. 643, and a good one in *Scots. Docs.* 95/10. For the first see below, App., pl. I. no. 3.

<sup>4</sup> See above, ii. 294-295, 303. Too much stress must not be laid on the statement in *Cont. Trivet*, quoted in ii. 295, n. 4, and 324-325, n. 5. But if the chronicler told the truth, Edward disregarded the pledge given to the Scots by the knight who brought it back to England.



acutely pointed one.<sup>1</sup> When the seal was lost again, in the rout of Byland, a humiliating proclamation to the sheriffs warned them not to give credence to recent letters under privy seal as it had been lately lost. Twelve days later, another circular announced that the seal was found and had been all the time in safe custody, so that there was no reason for suspecting documents bearing it.<sup>2</sup>

Edward II.'s son, Edward of Windsor, used before his accession to the throne a privy seal of 25 mm. When, after the collapse of his father's power, the younger Edward was, on October 26, chosen keeper of the realm by the magnates, we are told by one of the close roll memoranda,<sup>3</sup> so precious in instructing us in the technicalities of official methods, that the duke began to exercise his rights under his own privy seal, then in the custody of Robert Wyvill, his clerk, "because he had no other seal for rule at that time." The duke's privy seal continued to be exclusively employed for the whole of his regency, October 26 to November 23, when, after Edward II.'s capture, it was assumed that "the power of the said keeper ceased from the king's return into the realm." This meant that the new government had obtained possession of both the great and privy seals of Edward II. and was, therefore, no longer compelled to use the duke's privy seal. However, when Edward II. was deposed and the duke became Edward III., the new king again employed his privy seal as duke, though now apparently only for the issue of letters under the privy seal. This use of Edward's ducal privy seal went on from January 25 to February 10, 1327.<sup>4</sup> The first extant writ sealed with the proper privy seal of Edward III. is dated February 11, 1327,<sup>5</sup> so that the engravers did not lose much time. The new seal was 30 to 32 mm. in diameter, the size of Edward II.'s privy seal, or perhaps a little larger.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> There is a good impression of it in *Exch. Accts.* 68/2/40 (Berwick, Nov. 22, 1316), and in *Exch. of Rec., Warr. for Issues*, I, there are good traces of it, measuring 28 mm. in diameter, on instruments dated Scrooby, Nov. 29, 1316, and York, Nov. 3, 1322. Blank impressions of the seal are often 30 mm. in diameter. See below, App., plate I. no. 4.

<sup>2</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1318-23, p. 682.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.*, 1323-27, pp. 655-656; *Foedera*, ii. 646.

<sup>4</sup> *C.W.* 136/1-74. Of these, no. 4 is expressly "datum sub priuato sigillo quo utebatur antequam suscepimus regni nostri gubernaculum."

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* 136/73.

<sup>6</sup> Examples are to be seen in *Exch. of Rec., Warr. for Issues*, bundle 2, the king to Robert Wodehouse, May 22, 1330 (31 mm.); *ib.*, bundle 3, March 2 and



The arms and inscription were the same as on the privy seals of Edward I. and Edward II., but the shield was flanked on each side by a small fleur-de-lys and was surmounted with a crescent. This seal continued in use for nearly twelve years, the last surviving writ bearing its impression being dated April 23, 1338.<sup>1</sup>

The departure of Edward III. to the continent in July 1338 was preceded and attended by many ministerial and political readjustments. Among the minor changes was the adoption of a new privy seal. On April 25 orders were issued to all sheriffs to exhibit in full county court the impressions of this, which alone was to be used on and from that date.<sup>2</sup> The first document that I have noticed bearing it is dated April 27, so that little time was lost in putting the orders into force. The new seal was 35-37 mm. in diameter, 5 mm. bigger than its predecessor,<sup>3</sup> the fleur-de-lys and crescent of 1327-38 were replaced by a Gothic scroll pattern between the shield and the inscription round the rim, and the inscription became SECRETUM EDWARDI REGIS ANGLIE.<sup>4</sup>

Within two years the march of events made the new seal obsolete. In January 1340, Edward assumed the title of king of France, with the immediate object of gratifying his Flemish allies. At the Flemings' request, says a chronicler, Edward changed his arms, the impressions of his seals, the greater and the lesser, and the style of his letters.<sup>5</sup> The new regnal year, 14 Edward III., which had begun on January 25, 1340, was to be described as the fourteenth of Edward's reign in England, and the first of his reign in France. On the king's return to England in February, he summoned a parliament and announced

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April 16, 1338. An example of 1335 is photographed in *Durham Seals*, plate E. 8, and one of 1332 in Shadwell and Salter, *Oriel College Records* (Oxford Hist. Soc.), App. vii. plate 2. The fleur-de-lys and crescent are more conclusive evidence of the date of this writ than the argument in n. 2, p. 292, where it is printed.

<sup>1</sup> *Exch. of Rec., Warr. for Issues*, bundle 3. See also App., pl. I. no. 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Foedera*, ii. 1031.

<sup>3</sup> *Exch. of Rec., Warr. for Issues*, bundle 3. A comparison of the writs in this bundle establishes the certainty of the change. The smaller seal is on writs dated Feb. 22, March 2, April 11 and 23; the larger on those of April 27, May 1 and 8, June 11 and 26, and Aug. 1.

<sup>4</sup> It is figured in *Durham Seals*, plate E. No. 9. See also below, App., pl. I. (6).

<sup>5</sup> Bridlington, p. 148, "impressiones sigillorum suorum maioris et minoris . . . variavit."

in the writs that he would justify before the members the assumption of his new title. Simultaneously, he sent letters close to sheriffs, justices and lords of the greater franchises, announcing that he had "provided certain seals, the great and the privy, the impressions whereof he wishes to be known throughout all the realm." He, therefore, sent with his letters schedules containing impressions of the new seals, and ordered them to be shown publicly in full county court and elsewhere, directing the various officers to show them in the public places within their jurisdiction.<sup>1</sup>

The first privy seal of Edward as king of France and England measures, in good impressions, 38 mm. or  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches in diameter, and is, therefore, slightly larger than its predecessor. It is a "seal of arms," but the shield displays the lilies of France (two, one, two) quarterly, first and fourth, with the leopards of England, second and third, and bears the inscription SECRETUM EDWARDI REGIS FRANCIE ET ANGLIE. The space between the shield and the inscription is, as in the 1338-40 seal, taken up by a Gothic scroll, slightly less elaborate than in the previous seal, because of the larger size of the shield of arms with its fourfold division.<sup>2</sup> By October 1340 it had been replaced by another similar but not identical matrix, in which the quarterings of the French arms showed the lilies *semés* (instead of the five in the former matrix), the Gothic scroll was more elaborate, and the shield  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch narrower.<sup>3</sup> The legend was the same. This matrix remained in use until 1356 and impressions of it are not uncommon.<sup>4</sup>

In 1356 a still larger seal, 48 mm. or  $1\frac{2}{3}$  inches in diameter, replaced the seal of the previous sixteen years. Why a new privy seal should have been introduced just then is not clear, but there is no doubt whatever that it was. As far as is known, there survives only one comparatively whole wax impression, attached *en simple queue* to letters patent dated 8 November, 30 Edward III. (1356), for the years between

<sup>1</sup> *Foedera*, ii. 1115; *C.C.R.*, 1339-41, p. 457. For payment for this seal see above, p. 133.

<sup>2</sup> There is a good example, dated Feb. 14, 1340, in *Anc. Deeds*, LS. 303; see Appendix, plate II. no. 1. It is also figured in *Durham Seals*, plate E. no. 7.

<sup>3</sup> *Anc. Deeds*, WS. 639, 640; see Appendix, plate II. no. 2.

<sup>4</sup> In addition to those cited in n. 3 above, there is an example in Ad. Ch. 11, 307 (Birch, *op. cit.* i. 83, no. 711). The text of this is printed by Déprez, *Études de diplomatique*, p. 50.

1356 and 1360,<sup>1</sup> when another change was made. The 1356 specimen, in which the shield is as perfect and as sharply defined as on the day it was impressed, though the base and left side are broken, and the legend is gone except for fragments of the letters GLIE on the right of the top of the seal,<sup>2</sup> is sufficiently complete not only to enable us to describe the matrix in detail, but also to prove that the privy seal matrix used between 1356 and 1360 was again employed from 1369 to 1377. The shield bore the lilies of France and the leopards of England quarterly, was flanked and surmounted by crowns, and was surrounded by delicately elaborate Gothic tracery and an inscription which read SECRETUM EDWARDI REGIS FRANCIE ET ANGLIE.<sup>3</sup> The matrix was probably made in the summer of

<sup>1</sup> *Anc. Deeds*, WS. 642. Traces and fragments of it, some of them good, are to be found on a number of privy seal documents extant for the period, 1356–60. Maxwell-Lyte, p. 43, n. 10, quotes especially *C.W.* ff. 368, 910. See also *Exch. of Rec., Warr. for Issues*, 5/34, 35; 6. In file 36, of bundle 6, the traces on several writs, dated Feb. 3, March 5, and Sept. 8, 33 Ed. III., show that the first word of the legend is SECRETUM and the last ANGLIE. See p. 142 n.

<sup>2</sup> When first this seal was examined, the letters SEC were decipherable on the left of the top, but the edge was very brittle, and in the subsequent attempt at repair and preservation, they were unavoidably obliterated.

<sup>3</sup> When, some twenty years ago, I drew up the rough sketch upon which the present section is based, I had no knowledge of the privy seal made in 1356. My attention was first called to it by the mention of it in Maxwell-Lyte, p. 43. Since the publication of Sir Henry's book, however, the impression classed as *Anc. Deeds*, WS. 642, has been discovered. This was brought to Miss Broome's notice by Mr. D. L. Evans, of the P.R.O., who kindly compared a provisional list of privy seals for reproduction with the card catalogue of seals in the P.R.O., and suggested possible additions. Sir Henry has been good enough to examine this impression with Miss Broome and to discuss the question of its relation to the surviving impressions of the privy seal in use from 1369 to 1377. He agrees with her as to its inscription, and, therefore, that the seal of 1356 may not, as he at first supposed, be identified with a privy seal described as bearing the legend SECRETUM EDWARDI REGIS FRANCIE ET ANGLIE ET DOMINI HIBERNIE. This means that neither of the privy seals delivered by Wykeham to the king on March 28, 1371, and at the same time handed over by the king to the treasurer to be kept in the exchequer treasury, has been identified; *C.C.R.*, 1369–74, pp. 287–288; *Foedera*, iii. 912. It may be that the clerk making the memorandum on the dorse of the roll did not trouble to verify the inscriptions of the seals, and that actually the privy seals surrendered were not inscribed as stated there. On the face of it the clerk seems to have adapted the inscriptions of the great seals to meet the requirements of the privy seals—that is to say, he suppressed DEI GRATIA, began with SECRETUM, and merely altered the cases of the other words to make grammar. Whichever these privy seals were, the 1356–60 seal was not one, for—and with this again Sir Henry is in agreement—the absolute identity of the surviving impressions of the privy seal for the years 1369–77 with this 1356 impression and the fragments indicated above in n. 1, is entirely convincing evidence that the 1356



1356, because the earliest surviving instrument issued under the new seal is dated August 22, 1356,<sup>1</sup> and because on December 16, 1356, on the authority of a privy seal mandate of that Michaelmas term, John Chichester, goldsmith of London, was paid £8 for making the king's privy seal.<sup>2</sup>

In the treaty of Calais of October 1360, Edward III. renounced the title of king of France. Fresh seals were necessarily struck to meet the changed situation. The new privy seal was a handsome instrument, just 50 mm., or 2 inches, in diameter, and, therefore, exactly double the size of the privy seal of Edward I. The lilies of France (*semés*) were still quartered with the leopards of England, and the arms surrounded by an elaborate Gothic border. Over the shield, and on each side, was the device of a crown. Above the right crown and below the left, there was a bearded head,<sup>3</sup> while below the right crown and above the left there was a double rose. The chief innovation was the inscription, which ran EDWARDUS DEI GRA[TIA] REX ANGLIE D[OMI]N[U]S HIBERNIE ET ACQ[UI]TANIE.<sup>4</sup> The omission of "secretum" was a new departure, as was the introduction of "Dei Gratia" and the lordships of Ireland and Aquitaine. There was good

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matrix was used again after the resumption by Edward III. in 1369 of the title king of France; see below, pp. 141-142. I have carefully revised this section in the light of Sir Henry's volume, and corrected with its aid various shortcomings, but I feel bound to say that our independent work over the same ground has led to substantially the same results. I have published the section now for the sake of completeness and because it approaches the subject from a somewhat different view-point from that of Sir Henry, but a certain amount of repetition of Sir Henry is inevitable. I cannot forbear expressing my thanks to him for the help derived from using his detailed and valuable study, and his personal interest in my own work.

<sup>1</sup> In *C.W.* 368/23216, there are five writs of this date, four showing traces of having been sealed with the smaller privy seal. After that date the traces are of the larger seal only. The only extant *Exch. of Rec.*, *Warr. for Issues* for 30 Ed. III. are a writ from chancery and a signet letter; the earliest exchequer warrant under the privy seal is dated July 18, 31 Ed. III.; *Exch. of Rec.*, *Warr. for Issues*, 5/34.

<sup>2</sup> *I.R.* 384/4. Record of payment on August 2, 1356, to William Morton for making a "certain seal" for the king (*I.R.* 380/20) is interpreted by Sir Henry Maxwell-Lyte as payment for the new privy seal. But, apart from the fact that the rapidity of this payment might be a little suspicious if it were for the new privy seal, there is the evidence of this more precisely recorded payment to Chichester—apparently unknown to Sir Henry—which seems clear and indubitable.

<sup>3</sup> Was Edward III. himself the model?

<sup>4</sup> Shadwell and Salter, *Oriel College Records* (Oxf. Hist. Soc.), pp. 295-296, print an act under this seal and describe it with a facsimile in Appendix vii. plate iv. 1. See also *Durham Seals*, plate E. 3, and below, App., plate II. no. 4.



reason for the omission of "secretum," for there had long been a *secretum* which was not the privy seal, but was already largely accepted as an alternative to it. On the ground that Edward had a right to use his mother's arms, there was some justification for the retention of the French arms, though it suggests possible difficulties as to the execution of the treaty.<sup>1</sup>

This seal was used until 1369, when, as we know, Edward III. again took the title of king of France. It may well have been the seal for which, on June 19, 1361, the exchequer paid John Chichester, goldsmith, of London, £7:18:8, "for making two seals of silver for the privy seal of the lord king."<sup>2</sup> If so, the king paid his seal-maker more promptly than he often had on previous occasions. This payment has greater interest in suggesting that it was now necessary to have the privy seal in duplicate. At the same time, keeper Buckingham was paid 37 shillings in compensation for the privy seal which the king had made obsolete by his adoption of a new seal after the treaty.<sup>3</sup> Disused seals seem to have been a perquisite of the keeper, and Buckingham on receiving this grant evidently left the superseded seal in the office, for in 1369 it was again taken into use.

As a result of the renewal of the French war in 1369, and Edward III.'s resumption of the title of king of France, the current seals, including of course the privy seal, were by order of parliament deposited on June 11 in the exchequer, when the chancellor delivered an old set of seals, describing Edward as king of France, to their respective keepers. Among them a "seal of one piece," appointed for the office of the privy seal, was delivered to the keeper of the privy seal, Peter Lacy.<sup>4</sup> This

<sup>1</sup> The importance attached to the arms is minimised by the story in Geoffrey Baker (*Chron.* p. 66) of what Philip VI. said when Edward III. first assumed the French arms and title. "Quod, inquit, cognatus noster arma gerit quadrata de armis Francie et Anglie compaginatis, non nobis displicet, pro eo quod pauperiori nostre parentele bachalario partem armorum nostrorum regalium libenter concederemus deferendam; set quod in suis sigillo et literis prius nominat se regem Anglie quam Francie, et primum quarterium suorum armorum cum leopardis anteposit quaterio lilaio nos angustiat."

<sup>2</sup> Devon, *Issue Rolls, Henry III.-Henry VI.*, p. 175. The source of this is *I.R.* 408/28.

<sup>3</sup> *I.R.* 408/28, "In recompensacionem priuati sigilli quod rex fecit mutari tempore quo concordia facta fuit inter ipsum dominum regem et regem Francie, quod quidem sigillum eidem custodi quasi de feodo suo pertinebat."

<sup>4</sup> *Foedera*, iii. 868-869; *Rot. Parl.* ii. 300, "Unum aliud scilicet de una pecia pro officio priuati sigilli ordinatum."

was none other than the privy seal which had been used from 1356 to 1360, as careful comparison of the surviving wax impressions attached to documents dated between 1369 and 1377 with the extant impressions for the earlier period proves.<sup>1</sup>

The privy seal of Richard II. was even more magnificent than the later seals of his grandfather. In size it was 58 mm. in diameter and was inscribed SECRETUM RICARDI REGIS FRANCIE ET ANGLIE. The arms of France and England, quarterly, were surmounted by an open crown and supported by two lions couchant. Each of these beasts held up a large ostrich feather transfixing a scroll. Examples of this fine seal are much more numerous than are examples of the privy seals of preceding reigns.<sup>2</sup> To the end privy seals retained the royal arms. They vary in size from the 2½ inches of Henry V. and Henry VII. to the 1½ inches of James I., and the 3 to 4 inches of later monarchs, that of Victoria being 3⅞ inches. The privy seal was abolished in 1884,<sup>3</sup> but the keeper, curiously enough, was not. The high rank in the ministerial hierarchy of this nominal keeper of a non-existent instrument still testifies to the importance of the office in bygone days.<sup>4</sup>

## SECTION IV

### THE SMALL SEALS IN SOME OTHER LANDS

I have already, in more than one place,<sup>5</sup> suggested that mediæval administrative institutions generally, and such technicalities

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 138-139, and compare the different impressions in *Ancient Deeds*, A. 15105 (1370); *Ancient Deeds*, A. 3256 (1375); *Ancient Deeds*, WS. 642; *Exch. Accts.* etc., bundle 68, file 5 No. 2, file 6 No. 3; *Exch. of Rec., Warr. for Issues*, bundles 5, 6, 9, 10; *Brit. Mus. L.F.C.* iii. 19, legend not preserved; *Archives Nationales*, J. 919, described in Douët d'Arcq (*op. cit.* iii. 267), No. 10029, as "environ 45 mm.," but it is a fragment of which the legend is destroyed. See below, Appendix, plate II. no. 3.

<sup>2</sup> For examples see (a) *Ad. Ch.* 7378, xxxvi. 187, a, b, c; (b) P.R.O., SB. 2, 72, and *Ancient Deeds*, WS. 630; (c) Douët d'Arcq, *op. cit.* No. 10,034, from *Arch. Nat.* J. 644, No. 19. See also *Durham Seals*, plate E. No. 2, and below, App., pl. III. no. 1.

<sup>3</sup> 47-48 Vict. c. 30, § 3.

<sup>4</sup> The Deputy Master of the Mint has kindly informed me that no privy seal matrices were engraved for Edward VII. and the present King. In the ceremonies of resigning and receiving seals of office at each change of government, the privy seal of queen Victoria is now given up by, and passed to, the Lord Privy Seal.

<sup>5</sup> See especially, above, i. 7-8, 15, 19, 30-31, 148-155, 229-231, and ii. 312-313.

as the use and custody of seals throughout the western world, followed certain definite lines, and that they can be studied much more profitably in comparison than in isolation. Let us now apply this principle a little further, and illustrate the growth of the English small seals by some selected foreign analogies, beginning, as is only natural, with some consideration of the arrangements made in contemporary France for the administration of the French king's secret seal, which, as we have seen, was the French equivalent to our privy seal.<sup>1</sup>

The fourteenth century secret seal of the French kings was, like the English privy seal, a "seal of arms," the *écu semé de France* naturally taking the place of the leopards of England. The size of the seal increased as time went on and as the seal became more solemn and official and more richly ornamented with crowns, symbols of the evangelists, elaborated borders and the like.<sup>2</sup> It is curious that while our privy seal was, apparently from the beginning, inscribed with a legend of which the first word was *secretum*, no *sceau du secret* of the first three Valois kings bore any legend at all. In the invariable employment of red wax, in the methods of fixing the seal to the document, and generally in the verbal formulae of the instruments, there is a remarkable similarity between English privy seals and French *secreta*. Though substantially used for the same purposes as the English privy seal, the French *secretum* was even more thoroughly official. In particular, certain letters close, which would have been sealed with the great seal in England, were in France almost invariably sealed with the secret seal.<sup>3</sup> Inevitably, a seal in such continual official use could not remain in the king's personal custody, and, as the seat of government became more and more centred in Paris, could comparatively seldom

<sup>1</sup> I have based my comparison upon the material provided in M. Morel's *Grande Chancellerie Royale*, especially pp. 62-68, 80-84, 244-250, and in particular the very valuable documents published in his "Pièces justificatives." As the secret seal is only incidentally part of M. Morel's subject, he is naturally fullest when dealing with it in its relations to the chancery, and nowhere discusses its administration at length apart from this. P. Viollet, unfortunately, only devotes a few lines to this subject in *Histoire des institutions politiques et administratives de la France*, ii. p. 141, though the little he says is of great value.

<sup>2</sup> Morel, *op. cit.* pp. 262-266. Philip VI.'s *secreta* were about 26 mm., John's 33 mm., Charles V.'s 40 mm. in diameter.

<sup>3</sup> L. Delisle, "Notes sur les sceaux des lettres closes," in *Bibl. de l'École des Chartes*, 4<sup>e</sup> série, t. ii. pp. 533-537: Giry, *Diplomatique*, p. 653.



be in the same place as the monarch. As early as 1312, it had its official custodian. It was, as Bardin's chronicle tells us, the *secretum sigillum cuius custodiam habebat cambellanus*,<sup>1</sup> and the importance of the French chamberlain of this period throws into the shade the infant dignity of the English keeper of the privy seal. But it is important to note that the French keeper, like the English one, was a member of the royal household. In France as in England, the chamberlain was conspicuous among the knightly or lay members of the *hôtel du roi*. The main difference was that the English keeper was an ecclesiastic, while the French one was a layman.

The French counterparts of the clerks of the privy seal were the *clerks du secre*, the later secretaries, who first appear in records in 1316, but whose origin goes back at any rate to the days of Philip the Fair.<sup>2</sup> In numbers, emoluments, dignity and prospects the French secretaries were the superior, the four clerks of the privy seal of Edward III. cutting a poor figure in comparison with the eighteen secretaries of the regent Charles in 1359.<sup>3</sup> Their division into eleven clerical and seven lay secretaries admitted into the management of the secret seal a non-clerical element a century before the English privy seal office lost its exclusively clerical character, though the lay element was due, not to a premature development of French anti-clericalism, but

<sup>1</sup> De Vic et Vaissete, *Hist. générale de Languedoc*, t. x. preuves, col. 30 ed. Privat. M. Morel's defence of this text against the scepticism of M. Giry (*Diplomatique*, p. 653) and other earlier writers is convincing, and may perhaps be strengthened by the arguments in my text. There are very numerous examples, both in this country and abroad, of seals being in the custody of chamberlains. For instance, within Britain, the seals for the various districts of North Wales, South Wales and Cheshire were normally kept by the chamberlains of Carnarvon, Carmarthen and Chester. This usage was continued by the Act of Union, 35 Hen. VIII. c. 26, 6-20, which put the seven seals for the grouped marcher districts centring round Brecon and Denbigh in the charge of the chamberlains of Brecon and Denbigh. Bowen, *Statutes of Wales*, p. 104. Cf. also *Rot. Parl.* iii. 268 quoted below, p. 209, n. 3. Compare the English "chamberlain of Scotland," whose sphere became gradually narrowed down to Berwick, almost the only Scottish town that remained permanently under English rule. Cf. also below, pp. 148-149, 160.

<sup>2</sup> Morel, pp. 62-63.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* pp. 515-516. Not all of these, however, served at the same time. There were no more than three "notaires suivant le roi" in 1316, only one of whom was a secretary. In 1350 there were two secretaries at court, one civil and one criminal. But four other notaries "followed the king," Viollet, ii. 141. There were constant complaints of the excessive number of secretaries. See e.g. the *Ordonnance Cabochienne of 1413*, pp. 144-145, ed. Coville (1891).



to a nicer sense of ecclesiastical propriety than that which obtained in England.<sup>1</sup> The eighteen *sols parisis*, which the French secretaries received for each day of service, were a nobler reward than the sevenpence halfpenny a day wages of the clerks of the English privy seal. All through our period, the French secretaries retained that close personal connection with the king and his court which the English clerks lost when they were virtually removed from the household, about the middle of the fourteenth century. In consequence the French secretariat offered a wider career to the ambitious. From it arose directly the later secretaries of state, and the modern ministers.<sup>2</sup> Long before this process had matured, the English privy seal office had become a narrow and self-contained department of secondary importance cut off from the main current of English political life. Yet, for all that, it was the stock from which the secretarial and signet offices arose, and, therefore, an indirect source of the modern secretary of state.

The essential distinction between the French *clerks du secre* and the English privy seal clerks lies in the fundamental difference between the English and French secretariats. Since the days of Philip the Fair, the French kings had possessed a single centralised secretarial department, served by officials of a common type subject to the chancellor as their official head, who early developed a strong corporate tradition. In England, on the other hand, each department of state had its own secretarial staff practically unrelated to any other.<sup>3</sup> The clerks of the chancery, of the exchequer, of the two benches, and of the household, wardrobe and chamber, formed for each office a self-contained and self-sufficing unit. By the middle of the fourteenth century the clerks of the privy seal had separated themselves from the ward-

<sup>1</sup> The lay element in France was due partly to the fact that the office of keeper of the great seal was open to laymen since the days of Philip the Fair, but mainly owing to the regard paid in France to the canonical prohibition of the clergy taking part in criminal justice; Morel, p. 55. It must not be forgotten that the keeper of the French secret seal was always a layman, a chamberlain.

<sup>2</sup> Viollet, ii. 141.

<sup>3</sup> Maitland (Introd. to *Memoranda de Parl.* p. xxxvii) describes the chancery of 1305 as a "general secretarial bureau." This is an over-statement. There was not, even under Edward I., such a general bureau in England. In view of the writing done by Benstead, not to mention his predecessors, for the privy seal, to say nothing of the organised chancery of the exchequer, it is wrong to say that the chancery "does nearly all the king's writing for him."

robe clerks. We have seen that Henry III. made spasmodic, but unsuccessful, efforts in the direction taken by Philip the Fair. Edward I., however, never thought it worth his while, and Baldock's attempt, under his weak son, to upset the departmental system by setting up a chancery of the French sort, was not persevered in by Edward III.<sup>1</sup> The very fact that political development was more advanced in England than in France would have made it extremely difficult for even an Edward I., had he been so minded, to have emulated the policy of Philip the Fair.

After 1238 the English chancery was so far cut off from the household that it had a staff of clerks of its own. The comparative lateness with which the French *curia regis* split up into distinct offices of state resulted in the chancery remaining in complete association with the royal household until 1321, and even then being only partially separated from it.<sup>2</sup> This persistence of household control led to a strong group of royal notaries growing up in France with interests and traditions of their own. As time went on, the inevitable but gradual differentiation of the government departments compelled the French king to risk breaking up the unity of the corporation of notaries by attaching various members to various courts, but tradition was too firmly established to be weakened. The notaries assigned to write for the parliament or the *Chambre des Comptes*, those still attached to the court, and those delegated to work under the direct jurisdiction of the chancellor, remained members of the same body.<sup>3</sup> Whether they wrote at the *Chambre des Comptes* or at the *Châtelet*, they continued to take their pay and their allowances from the chancellor himself, or from the household.

In 1352 the royal notaries set up a confraternity which held its meetings in the convent of the Celestins at Paris. For this society there were prescribed special religious services, corporate

<sup>1</sup> See above, ii. 312-313.

<sup>2</sup> The important ordinance of 1321, which defined the later position of the French chancery, is printed in Morel, pp. 490-492. Several previous ordinances had prepared the way for this separation, see *ib.* pp. 487-490.

<sup>3</sup> Already, in 1321, Philip V. distinguished the notaries "*avecques nous*" and those "*avecques nostre chancelier ou avecques aucuns de nos gens qui ont le droit de commander et de faire faire lettres*"; Morel, p. 492. Even by 1291 there were six notaries "*qui devoient estre avec le chancelier*"; *ib.* p. 117. They corresponded to our chancery clerks in the stricter sense.

banquets, common funds and organisation, periodical meetings, sobriety of dress and gravity of deportment. So powerful did the college become that the king handed over to its two proctors the arrangement of the rotation in which its members discharged some of its official functions.<sup>1</sup> He also approved of the resolution of the college that extraordinary payments due to notaries and secretaries should no longer be paid to the officers who did the work, but should be pooled and divided on general principles.<sup>2</sup> More than this, when the secretaries and notaries complained that they could not get their wages, either from the household *Chambre des Deniers* or from the national *Chambre des Comptes*, they were allowed to appoint one or two receivers from among themselves, empowered to lay hands upon the fines and other dues levied in parliament and to pay their colleagues from this source.<sup>3</sup> There is no trace of jealousy between the notaries attached to the different offices. Even the separate interests of the clerical and lay notaries could not destroy their keen *esprit de corps*. Thus the French king's scribes remained, all through the fourteenth century, one body with strong traditions and an organisation powerful enough to impose the wishes of the college on the king himself.

The same centralising bureaucratic spirit, which made a single corporation of the writers for the different offices, also insisted on the supply of parchment to all the departments of court and state coming from one purchasing bureau. It was characteristic of the survival of the primitive curialist element in the midst of the many radical innovations of Capetian autocracy that the authority to buy and distribute was vested in the treasurer of the chapel of the royal palace in Paris, the Sainte Chapelle.<sup>4</sup>

The secretaries who wrote for the *sceau du secre* were the best paid and the most dignified and influential members of the powerful corporation of French civil servants, whose unity typified so well the oneness and indivisibility of the monarchy. Yet their splendid position, as notaries attached to the king's

<sup>1</sup> Morel, pp. 534-537.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* pp. 551-555.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* p. 531.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* pp. 473, 485. In England each department gradually tended to buy its parchment where it would, and to pay for it separately, though we still find the fourteenth century exchequer buying parchment, etc., for the privy seal as well as for its own purposes; see *I.R.* 397/1, and 409/7. This was in 1359 and 1361.



person, did not prevent their sharing in the corporate life of their class, for they were notaries first and secretaries afterwards. Drawing up the king's confidential correspondence was not their only function. A large number of documents emanating from the household required the apposition of the great seal, and these, it seems, were written by the secretaries, and authenticated by their signatures,<sup>1</sup> just as the letters of great seal asked for by parliament and the *Chambre des Comptes* were prepared by royal notaries especially deputed to write for these services. Indeed the secretaries, like the other notaries, seem to have been liable to be told off by chancellor or king to discharge any task within the sphere of the great chancery. The *audiencier*, whose work to some extent corresponds to that of our clerk of the hanaper, was commonly a secretary and not a notary of chancery, although he was almost entirely concerned with chancery business. As a special concession, secretaries need not, unless so disposed, take their turn with the ordinary notaries in doing the writing work for the Friday sessions of the *Chambre des requêtes de l'hôtel*. If their occupations in the court kept them away, they were still entitled to have their share in the profits which the notaries derived from these gatherings.<sup>2</sup> Thus, though the French secret seal was no seal of chancery, the clerks who wrote for it were, like all other scribes of the administration, subject to the jurisdiction of the chancellor, and, in a sense, within the chancery system.

Our conclusion, then, must be that, underneath apparent similarities, there was a radical difference between the English and French administrative systems. While the former was worked by small groups of clerks disconnected from each other, and belonging to self-contained departments, the latter was administered by a single great corporation of writers, controlled by the chancellor, and even when some were set apart for work in a special office, they were liable to be called away from it as

<sup>1</sup> There is a curious instance in Morel, pp. 514-515, where is printed a "mandement" of the Regent Charles, of 1359, signed by a secretary, though under the great seal, and addressed to the "audiencier," a chancery officer.

<sup>2</sup> Morel, p. 536, "Secretarii nostri . . . sedeant si velint, et si non sedeant, cum ipsi sint continue propter litteras clausas et alias multipliciter onerati, ac eciam impediti . . . participant cum suis sociis sedentibus in dictis luero sive collationibus cartarum, ac si ipsi de facto cum eisdem sederent."

the interests of the general service required.<sup>1</sup> The English system was more individual, the French more collegiate, more logical, more unified. The abiding connection of the French government departments with the court, and the comparative weakness of the opposition to the central power beyond the Channel, help to explain the differences in the administrative development of the two countries. There was hardly a French equivalent to the clerk of the privy seal. Much less was there a French equivalent to the office of the privy seal. These dissimilarities became increasingly evident as the fourteenth century grew older. The fact that the clerks of the secret seal in France worked in the chamber under the chamberlain made them more like the English chamber officers, especially the receiver of the chamber, who was also clerk or keeper of the secret seal. The *chambre du roi* played an even smaller part in the French system than Edward III.'s chamber in the English,<sup>2</sup> and between the signet and the great seal, the province of the French secret seal became somewhat restricted. One result of this may have been the slight interest shown in its conduct. Only with the organisation of the signet office and the establishment of a specialised king's secretary at the head of it do we find, at last, any kind of English counterpart to conditions in France. The multiplicity of the French secretaries and the unity of the English secretariat prevented the parallel from being a close one even then.

We may turn from France to Scotland, whose administrative institutions, at their source those of a great fief, a glorified Chester

<sup>1</sup> We must not forget numerous English instances of clerks being borrowed from one department by another. But a chancery clerk lent in time of pressure to write for the privy seal remained a chancery clerk, and it was no part of his business to transfer himself as it would have been his official duty in France.

<sup>2</sup> In the *Ordonnance Cabochienne* (pp. 120-121, 1891 edition), which is a characteristic expression of French ideals of sound government, the chamberlains are those who are responsible for acts of secret seal. The secretaries are in innumerable cases mentioned as writing and signing the acts which the chancellor is to seal with the great seal.

or Durham, were modified during the fourteenth century by rulers conscious alike of Scottish nationality and Scottish independence. Unluckily, the only continuous Scottish records surviving for the centuries before the fifteenth are the exchequer rolls, beginning in 1264, and the register of the great seal, beginning in 1306.<sup>1</sup> To work out the beginnings of the small seals of Scotland is, accordingly, difficult. Little notice has so far been paid to the subject of Scottish administration. Few Scottish historians have interested themselves in it, and fewer still have investigated it comparatively, though without comparison little good work can be done. What is offered here is a mere outline, superficial and provisional, of the process by which the Scottish small seals seem to have developed, but if it calls the attention of Scottish historians to the wealth of material, surviving from the times of the first Stewart kings, for the study of the administrative history of Scotland, it will have served its purpose.

When small seals first began to appear in Scotland is not clear. What is sometimes described as the *secretum* of Alexander III. is not a secretum at all, and the *signetum regis Roberti*, described as the signet of the victor of Bannockburn, may possibly not go back beyond Robert II. or Robert III.<sup>2</sup> Not that there is anything unlikely in Alexander III. having had a privy or a secret seal, but there is no proof that he had. Reformers of Scottish administration saw the need of such a seal, as is clear from the plans submitted to Edward I. for the government of Scotland by the English "according to the ancient customs of the land."<sup>3</sup> A privy seal was to be provided, and was to be carried and kept by one of the wisest and most discreet of the realm, "for if this office be well governed, it is the key and the

<sup>1</sup> *Rotuli Scaccarii Regum Scotorum*, I. (1264-1359), II. (1359-79) and III. (1379-1406); *Register of the Great Seal of Scotland*, I. (1306-1424). The basis of the Scottish system was the king's household, and so long did the household retain its control that the Scottish "exchequer rolls" are more like our wardrobe accounts than our exchequer enrolments.

<sup>2</sup> Henry Laing's *Descriptive Catalogue of Impressions from Ancient Scottish Seals* (Bannatyne Club, 1850) is the work of a seal-engraver and not a historian. His identifications of early seals must be regarded with some suspicion.

<sup>3</sup> See Mary Bateson's *Scottish King's Household*, where she reprinted from the *Juridical Review* of Edinburgh (1901-1902) two papers explaining and largely translating a manuscript in Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, with suggestive and illuminating comments.



safety of the great seal and the prevention of all the errors which can arise between the king and his baronage.”<sup>1</sup> The chancellor was not to issue any writs out of chancery, except writs, of course, without special mandate of the king’s privy seal. The date of the issue of this document is supposed to be about 1306, and the success of Robert Bruce soon swept away any chance of its being executed. It cannot, therefore, be regarded as evidence of the existence of a Scottish privy seal at that time, and surviving imprints of *secretum regis Roberti* may quite as well belong to Robert II. or Robert III. as to the great Bruce, though there is every probability that Robert I. established or continued the use of an instrument already generally familiar.<sup>2</sup>

We can trace a vague succession of clerks and keepers of the Scottish privy seal from David II.’s time onwards.<sup>3</sup> Some of these later attained high positions, notably John Lyon, keeper of the privy seal in 1370–76, who, though apparently a clerk to begin with, became thane of Glamis, married Joan, the daughter of king Robert II., and rose to be chamberlain of Scotland. His murder in 1381 is one of the most famous deeds of violence of the time. To be named after Lyon was Mr. Duncan Petit, archdeacon of Glasgow, a wardrobe clerk who acted as keeper of the privy seal between 1379 and 1389, and became chancellor of Scotland in 1398. Both these keepers of the secret seal are often described as acting, *secretario in remotis agente*, as if the normal keeper was the king’s secretary, who later, of course, kept the king’s signet.

Quite clearly in the next century the two seals were distinct,

<sup>1</sup> This looks, at first sight, as if Edward I. had anticipated the Walton ordinances, or at least that those ordinances only set down what had long been customary, and suspicion of the document is increased by Miss Bateson’s statement that the date of the manuscript is about 1340, two years after the issue of the Walton ordinances, and a time when ideal plans for the government of Scotland might still attract English statesmen, though there was little chance of their being put into operation.

<sup>2</sup> John Balliol had a secret seal, affixed in 1302, long after his deposition, to a letter addressed by him to Philip the Fair. It is described in Douët d’Arcq, No. 10, 254, as a round seal of 30 mm. diameter. It was a shield of arms with the rampant lion of Scotland.

<sup>3</sup> Among them were John Lyon, Duncan Petit, Walter Wardlaw, archdeacon of Lothian, secretary of David II. in 1364, Reginald Crawford, 1390–1400, and Walter Forster, 1402–1404. The best material for these early keepers and secretaries is in the lists of “*auditores compotorum*” contained in the rolls of the Scottish exchequer.

for both the keeper of the secret seal and the secretary were normal members of the Scottish privy council.<sup>1</sup> The separation of the secret seal from the chancery is proved by a separate enrolment of letters under the secret seal, though this is no longer extant, until after 1488.<sup>2</sup> In this respect the Scottish office showed itself more businesslike than the English office of privy seal. Otherwise its methods and scope were similar to those of its English counterpart. The tendency to call the seal secret more often than privy suggests French or other continental influence. Before 1362 there was some sort of secret seal office, for in that year a payment was made to a "writer for the secret seal,"<sup>3</sup> and there was besides a *clericus rotulorum domini regis*, responsible for the archives of state and household.<sup>4</sup>

From Scotland to the Spanish Peninsula is a far cry, but there are few more instructive comparisons than that between the small seals of England and those of the kingdom of Aragon. We are fortunate in possessing, in the wonderful archives of the crown of Aragon at Barcelona, a considerable proportion of which is accessible in print, abundant information as to the nature and operations of its small seals. For the fourteenth century, when English relations with the "count-kings" of Catalonia and Aragon were constant and intimate, we are particularly helped by an instructive household ordinance issued in 1344 by Peter IV.

<sup>1</sup> *Register of the Privy Council of Scotland*, i. x. (1489).

<sup>2</sup> *Registrum Secreti Sigilli Regum Scotorum*, i., 1488-1529 (1908). The first entry is "Ther are the lreȝ that I selet sen my lordis passing to Aberdene." The *Registrum Magni Sigilli Regum Scotorum* begins in 1306, and is also published.

<sup>3</sup> *Rot. Scacc. Regum Scot.* ii. 116, "Et Johanni de Allycerum, *scribenti secreto sigillo*, de certa conventionē facta inter ipsum et dominum regem de terminis retroactis, xx li."

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* This officer, the Scottish equivalent to the English "custos rotulorum cancellarie," was also a permanent member of the Scottish king's council.

the Ceremonious. In many ways this invites contrast and comparison with Edward II.'s household ordinance of 1318.<sup>1</sup> The main difference between them is that while Edward II.'s ordinances were concerned only with household offices, excluding altogether chancery and treasury, every branch of the administration of the state was dealt with in Peter's legislation. The explanation of this difference lies in the fact that the whole government of the Aragonese kingdom was vested in the household, the throne and court being the only things in common, and, save in relation to them, the chief elements of Peter's realm, Aragon, Catalonia, Valencia and Mallorca, were absolutely cut off from each other, with their separate estates, laws and traditions. Accordingly Peter's ordinances group the Aragonese state under the heads of the household offices, dealing respectively with the *mayordomens*, the chief officers, and the offices of the *camarlenchs*, the *canceller* and the *maistre racional*, corresponding to our chamberlains, chancellor and treasurer.

Numerous as were the small seals of Edward III., those of his Aragonese contemporary were at least equally complicated, while Peter's great seals were far less simple than the great seals of Edward III. Peter had in the course of his reign three or four different types of great seal, including a bulla of gold, a bulla of lead, a great seal of majesty and a "common seal" (*sello comun*). All these were, as is natural, kept by the king's chancellor, who was assisted by a numerous and elaborately organised staff, described in detail in the section of the ordinances

<sup>1</sup> These "Ordenacions fetes per lo molt alt senyor En Pere Terc Rey Darago, sobra lo regiment de tots los oficials de la sua cort," were printed in 1850 by P. de Bofarull y Mascaro in *Coleccion de Documentos inéditos del Archivo general de la Corona de Aragon* t. v. pt. ii. pp. 7-266. Like Edward II.'s ordinances, they were issued during a contest between king and barons, but the victories of Boroughbridge (1322) and Epila (1348) soon turned in each case the scales in the king's favour. Edward's triumph was of brief duration, while Peter was able to rule on the lines laid down by his ordinances until his death in 1387. For comments on the ordinances see notably Finke, *Acta Aragonensia*, i.-iii., especially the illuminating introduction to vol. i. A systematic study of the Aragonese household was published in 1914 by Dr. Finke's pupil, K. Schwartz, in his *Aragonische Hofordnungen im 13. und 14. Jahrhundert*, one of the *Abhandlungen zur mittleren und neueren Geschichte*. For the seals see also F. de Sagarra y de Siscar, *Apuntes para un estudio de los sellos del Rey Don Pedro IV. de Aragon* (1895), and the same writer's magnificent and richly illustrated *Sigillografia Catalana* (1916), which contains full descriptions and numerous photographs of seals.



dealing with the chancellor.<sup>1</sup> With this may be usefully compared the English chancery ordinance of 1388-89.<sup>2</sup> The employment of red wax for all these seals of chancery emphasised to contemporary opinion the fact that they too were household seals.

The earliest of the Aragonese small seals can be traced back to the days of James II. (1291-1327), but they had become numerous and important by the time of Peter the Ceremonious. They are dealt with in his household ordinance in the section treating of the duties of the chamberlains (*camarlenchs*), who were two in number so that one could be away from court if necessary. The chamberlains' chief charge was the custody of the king's person and the king's chamber. Both were knights, and when both were together at court, one took precedence over the other and had the keeping of the secret seals, a care which in his absence passed to his colleague. The modesty of the king's secretarial work is indicated by the fact that there were only two clerks in the secretarial office. They not only wrote the king's secret letters and all documents sealed by the secret seal, but also saw to their registration, even registering letters written by the king's own hand, "if that be our will." They had, as well, to act as clerks of the king's council, and were, therefore, required to be "good and sufficient notaries for the office of the secretariat." One of them was always to be in attendance at court. Thus, the staff of the secret seal on duty at any one time consisted of one chamberlain to direct the work of the office and

<sup>1</sup> *Ordenacions*, pp. 208-211, "de la manera de sagellar ab segells de cera e ab bulla." The chancellor (*cancellor*), who was responsible for the great seals, was normally a bishop or archbishop and a doctor of laws. Under him was a vice-chancellor, "lo qual sia doctor en leys apres lo canceller sia posat, qui no ligat de negun ligam de sacre orde per tal que ço que per aventura per lo canceller en cas que fos archebisbe o bisbe o altre prelat o clergue, qui en criminals coses fer no poria, per aquest sia supplit"; *ib.* p. 113. Compare Finke, *Acta Aragonensia*, i. xlv-v, "Vir fidelis et sapiens et in jure civili peritus . . . vinculo alicuius sacri ordinis minime alligatus; ut si forte quid per cancellarium in criminalibus fieri non poterit, per istum suppleatur." There was also a protonotary to compose and register the letters, to whom apparently the actual care of the seal normally pertained. There were also permanent and assistant scribes (*scribans*), messengers and a "calfudor de la cera" for pendant seals. The latter also provided paper covers for the seals stamped on paper documents. Very elaborate rules for sealing with each of the chancery seals are also given.

<sup>2</sup> See above, iii. 443-446, and B. Wilkinson's *Chancery under Edward III.*, pp. 217-223 (M.U.P.), where a good text of the ordinances can be read.

one secretary to write, seal and register the acts. Simplicity in administration could go no further. Some, but not all, of the secretaries were important enough to have seats on the king's council along with the chancellor, vice-chancellor and the chamberlains.

Peter IV.'s grandfather, James II., who reigned over Aragon from 1291 to 1327, was the first Aragonese sovereign who is known to have had a secret seal. No impression of this has been preserved, but we know that it was much smaller than any of the three great seals which he possessed,<sup>1</sup> and that it was especially used for mandates. It accompanied him on his journeys when he left his great seals behind him. Besides this secret or privy seal, James II. had a *sigillum annuli nostri secretum*, which doubtless stood to his secret seal as Edward III.'s secret seal stood to his privy seal, and was the forerunner of the signets. Thus, these smaller instruments made their appearance almost simultaneously in England, France and Aragon.

For Peter IV.'s long reign (1336-87), the small seals of Aragon may be completely studied. Modern Catalan antiquaries recognise that the king always had more than one of them at his command. There was, for instance, the lesser and the greater secret seal, the *segell secret menor* and the *segell secret mayor*. Besides these, Peter possessed a *secrecius sigillum, nostre segell pus secret*.<sup>2</sup> All these were kept by the chamberlain and were often used to authorise the chancellor or protonotary to use one of the great seals.<sup>3</sup> The secret seals were not always with the king, for when Peter left Barcelona for a time in 1358, his secret seal remained there with his secretary. Besides them, Peter had a personal signet, his *sello del anillo*, which he kept in his own custody, and sometimes used when directing his chamberlain to employ one of the secret seals. It was regarded as expressing the personal wish of the king, and was therefore, like its English equivalents, employed as a warrant to the chancellor as well as to the secretary. The chancellor was forbidden to seal letters of perpetual privilege or grants of jurisdiction and lands, unless he had received verbal orders from

<sup>1</sup> Finke, i. lxxxviii-ix.

<sup>2</sup> Sagarra, *Apuntes para un estudio de los sellos de Don Pedro IV.*, pp. 123-124.

<sup>3</sup> Sagarra, p. 160, quotes an instance of a letter of secret seal, ordering the protonotary to seal a document with the bull of gold.

the royal mouth, or a mandate sealed by the *segell de nostre anell*.<sup>1</sup>

The ordinary secret seal was, as we might expect, a "seal of arms." The *sello del anillo* was octagonal in shape, each side measuring only 5 mm.<sup>2</sup> In the exclusive use of paper before the end of the thirteenth century for the documents issued under the small seals, the Aragonese were far in advance of England. Paper was also used by them to a fair extent for documents issued from chancery. As in every other country, so in Aragon, red was the appropriate colour for the wax employed for the secret seals, though the red lost much of its symbolical value since it was, as we have seen, employed for the seals of chancery as well.<sup>3</sup> Red was also a colour of distinction in the Empire, whose greatest magnates did not scruple to obtain charters extending to them permission to use that colour.<sup>4</sup>

To the student of English administration the most interesting point of likeness between England and Aragon is the separate custody of the great and small seals, for he is not blinded by the continental habit of describing any sealing office as a chancery. That habit is responsible for the frequent and gratuitous assumption that all seals were in consequence necessarily under the control of the "chancery," an assumption which postulates a unity of secretarial organisation that, despite the example of France, is the exception rather than the rule.<sup>5</sup> An excellent corrective to this erroneous opinion can be found in the fact

<sup>1</sup> *Ordenacions* of 1344, *u.s.* p. 115.

<sup>2</sup> Sagarra, *u.s.* plate ix. No. 17.

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 154.

<sup>4</sup> Bresslau, *Urkundenlehre*, p. 933 (1889). The habitual use of red wax in the imperial chancery began with Richard of Cornwall.

<sup>5</sup> A survival of this point of view causes so careful a scholar as Dr. K. Schwartz to write such sentences as the following: "Geradezu eine Ausnahme-stellung nehmen in der königlichen *Cambra* die *scrivans secretaris* ein. Sie unterstehen dem *Camerlench*, dem alles, was zur *Cambra* gehört, zu Gehorsam verpflichtet ist, aber auf ihre Tätigkeit hat der *Camerlench* so gut wie keinen Einfluss," and "Die *Scrivans Secretaris* gehören ihrem Amte nach zur Kanzlei, und ihrer Tätigkeit nach zur *Cambra*." Yet his own facts show that there was a completely organised, though very small, "secretariat" for the small seals, and a similar one for the financial seal. But he cannot get out of his mind the idea that there must be a "chancery" which either did, or ought to, deal with all sealing. Professor Finke is similarly influenced. Rightly emphasising the independence of the secret seal of the chancellor, he yet speaks of it as a "Zweig der Kanzlei," when his facts prove the contrary. Even in Bresslau's great *Urkundenlehre*, there is more than a suggestion of the same idea; see below, p. 158, n. 1.



that in the fourteenth century in Castile the secretarial organisation in charge of the secret seal was actually called the "chancery of the secret seal," and was clearly distinct from the office administering the great seal.

In documents of the most formal nature the keeper of the Castilian small seal was given the title of chancellor of the secret seal. Thus in 1362 Matthew Fernandez, *sigilli secreti domini regis cancellarius et in omnibus regnis suis notarius*, reduced to "public form" a treaty of alliance between Peter the Cruel and Edward III.<sup>1</sup> Again, a further treaty and other pacts between the same Castilian king and the Black Prince in 1366-67 were subscribed on the part of the former by the same *Mathaeus Fernandi, cancellarius secreti sigilli domini regis*,<sup>2</sup> a formula which in other documents is varied into *chancellor de nostre priue seal* and *cancellarius nostri regis Castellae privati sigilli*.<sup>3</sup> Another holder of the same office appears later in the correspondence of Peter's supplanter, Henry of Trastamare, with the Black Prince. This claimant to the throne of Castile wrote to Edward on the eve of Nájera under his secret seal,<sup>4</sup> and a few months later Henry's alliance with Louis of Anjou against the English was witnessed, among others, by the chancellor of his secret seal.<sup>5</sup> We must not overstress these titles, knowing, as we do, that two English keepers of the privy seal, Kilsby and Winwick, were called chancellors in formal documents because they happened at the moment to be keeping their master's great seal along with the privy seal in parts beyond the sea.<sup>6</sup> There is obviously need of a more meticulous comparison of the custody of the small seals in England and Castile than can be attempted here. The

<sup>1</sup> *Foedera*, iii. 672, 674. In 1364 M. Fernandez, still chancellor of the secret seal, witnessed a ratification of the alliance, "nostro regio sigillo plumbeo et propria manu nostra signatus." Twenty years earlier, the negotiators for the marriage of Edward III.'s daughter, Joan, to Peter in his youth, included, not the chancellor of the secret seal, but the chancellor of Castile; *ib.* iii. 22, 26, 46.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* iii. 800, 802-807, 821.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* pp. 801-803 and 825, where the "puritatis" is surely a misreading for "priuati." Was the substitution of "privy" for "secret" a concession to English usage? In the index of the Record Commission *Foedera* counsel is darkened by Matthew Fernandez being simply described as chancellor.

<sup>4</sup> Delachenal, iii. 557.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* iii. 562, "Gometio Garcie, cancellario sigilli secreti domini regis." By a regrettable slip, when referring to this passage above, i. 155, n. 1, I wrote "king of Aragon" when I ought to have written "king of Castile."

<sup>6</sup> See above, iii. 87, 226.

administration of fourteenth century Castile does not, in fact, seem to have been studied so thoroughly as that of contemporary Aragon, and there is no real Castilian counterpart to the mediaeval archives of Barcelona.

We must resist the temptation to wander further in unfamiliar fields by attempting other comparisons between the English small seals and their foreign equivalents. The subject is the more attractive since so little attention has apparently been paid to it. In the standard manuals of the last generation, such as those of Bresslau and Giry, the small seals themselves receive little attention, and the problems of their custody, operation and relation to the "chancery" of the great seals have hardly been raised outside France. Giry's work leaves little to be desired, and it has since been amplified by Morel, but although Giry knew all that was necessary as to the French *secretum*, his curiosity scarcely extended beyond his own country. Bresslau, while recognising that the judicial seals of the empire were kept independently of the imperial chancery, has nothing to say about the custody of the small seals, and most students of his book would conclude that they were kept in the chancery, just like the great seals.<sup>1</sup> It looks as if little precise information were procurable. Certain it is that the organisation of the custody and administration of those seals came long after their first appearance in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. Another conspicuous small seal, the famous fisherman's ring, the *secretum* of the papacy, was already employed by the middle of the thirteenth century under Clement IV. in 1265,<sup>2</sup> but it was not until nearly two centuries later that the organised office for the issuing of *briefs* under the fisherman's ring was established, in the days of Eugenius IV., and put under a specially appointed

<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, *Urkundenlehre*, p. 949, where he distinguishes between "die eigentliche Secreten, die der Obhut der Kanzleibeamten anvertraut waren" and "die wirkliche Geheimsiegel—zumeist Ringe—die der Siegelbesitzer selbst in persönlichem Gewahrsam behielt." The distinction of secret seals and signets is, of course, sound, as is the view that the latter were in the personal custody of their possessor. But the tacit assumption that "secreta" were normally chancery seals is surely beyond the mark, whatever may have obtained in the Empire.

<sup>2</sup> Giry, p. 692, gives early instances, e.g. in 1263 a letter to kinsmen and familiars was issued, "non . . . sub bulla, sed sub piscatoris sigillo quo Romani Pontifices in suis secretis utuntur." It was already, therefore, of some standing, and perhaps one of the earliest of secret seals.

cardinal secretary for briefs.<sup>1</sup> Other small seals may be assumed to have had a similar experience.

In conclusion we may, perhaps, again emphasise the fact, already often stated, that a study of the small seals gives valuable evidence of the similar origin of most mediaeval administrative institutions and of their similar, roughly simultaneous, development in different lands. This similarity of origin and development needs to be emphasised the more because we are still apt to read back into the institutions of the middle ages a "national" element of which those times were themselves utterly unconscious. The late appearance of these "secrets" and "signets" does not prevent their having a common origin in the ruler's household. Indeed, partly because they were so late a growth, except in a few of the more advanced states, they hardly ever got out of the household. In this, as in other matters, conditions, experience, ideals and the general methods of realising them, were much the same in every country, and we must be on our guard against allowing national self-complacency to see something unique and local in organisations which originated and developed in much the same ways all over western Europe. In every state of any importance, the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries saw the growth of the two types of "small seals"—the privy or secret, which we have already discussed, and the more intimate secret or signet, best represented perhaps by the signet ring, which we shall consider for England in our next chapter.

Neither in origin nor in development can the two types be separated absolutely. They were invariably, and in a special sense, household seals, even in lands where the household origin of the chancery had been almost forgotten. Such "secret seals" grew up not only in the great kingdoms but also in all the smaller states, and in the households of subjects as well as in the establishments of monarchs. Under Charles II. the Angevin kings of Naples had not only a small secret seal, but also some sort of special registration for letters sealed by it.<sup>2</sup> The fourteenth

<sup>1</sup> Giry, pp. 699-701, where a reproduction of the fisherman's ring seal is given, showing how it, like the ordinary "privy seal," was used to close the letter.

<sup>2</sup> See *Inventatio cronologica dei Registri Angioini*, pp. 67, 195-208. There was a "quaternus litterarum sigillatarum sigillo paruo secreto." I am indebted for this reference to Dr. Margaret Toynbee.



century nobleman in England came to use his one-faced "privy seal" constantly, and his two-faced great seal less and less. The more conservative-minded and tradition-loving magnates of the church, while adopting the new fashion, yet retained the old. Up to the last century the archbishop of Canterbury had his two-faced great seal, his one-faced small seal, and his signet, the last of which only in recent times ceased to be used for official acts of minor importance. To this day every English bishop has his great and his small seals.

Wherever there was the secret seal, there was the chamberlain its keeper, except in England. The indisposition of fourteenth century England to entrust the custody of a seal to lay hands made it the one exception to the rule, though the chamber clerk keeper, acting under the chamberlain, was not a remarkably different development. Not only in France and in Aragon, but also in the great fiefs of the French and Imperial crowns, the first chamberlain was constantly associated with the custody of the secret seal, as, for example, in the Netherlandish dominions of the Valois dukes of Burgundy.<sup>1</sup> So, too, did the chamberlain of the count of Holland keep the count's secret seal.<sup>2</sup> Almost equally general with the assignment to the chamberlain of the charge of the secret seal was the tendency to make that charge independent of the chancellor.

<sup>1</sup> See above, iv. 263, and G. Huydt's article in the *Mélanges Henri Pirenne*, pp. 264-265.

<sup>2</sup> See J. Cuvelier, *Les Origines de la fortune de la maison d'Orange-Nassau*, Acad. Royale de Belgique, Classes des Lettres et Sciences morales et politiques. 2<sup>e</sup> série, t. xvi., fasc. ii., 1921.

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE REDUPLICATIONS OF THE PRIVY SEAL

#### SECTION I

##### THE SECRET SEALS

A NEW phenomenon presents itself early in the fourteenth century. Side by side with the privy seal we find that there existed a "secret seal" which is demonstrably different from it.

In the thirteenth century the phrase "secret seal" only occasionally occurs in English records, and it is pretty certain that for the greater part it was merely a synonym for privy seal. Even when this particular seal came to be invariably described as *privatum* we must never forget that its matrix had the word *secretum*, not the word *privatum*, engraved upon it.<sup>1</sup> In much the same way the French king's *sceau du secret* was sometimes accidentally described as his *sceau privé*. More commonly the terms "secret" and "privy" were used interchangeably to describe the small seals of individual English magnates. The wonder is that the royal *secretum* was so seldom called secret seal in English official documents. When the word secret was used, it was generally in addressing foreign chanceries, which in their turn sometimes described the English privy seal as a secret seal. This confusion of privy and secret continued all through the fourteenth century, and we have constantly to be on our guard against it. Moreover, we shall frequently have to note that, even when rare or non-existent in insular records, it survived in the

<sup>1</sup> The "secretum argenti quod fuit regis Henrici, patris regis Edwardi," preserved among the wardrobe jewels in 28 Edw. I., was most probably a privy seal; *L.Q.G.* p. 351. It was, I believe, the seal stolen from the wardrobe treasury in 1303; see above, i. 290.

loose speech of chroniclers, and not seldom in official correspondence from the papal curia.

A different practice arose in the last years of the reign of Edward I., in the use of a secret seal as a *cachet*, or stamp, for sealing up documents, in a fashion suggestive of this secret seal being different from the privy seal employed to authenticate them. Possibly the introduction of the practice may be put even earlier. We have seen that on November 18, 1234, Henry III. issued a mandate to the treasurer of the New Temple to deliver to Hubert de Burgh certain charters and muniments belonging to Hubert which the king had committed to the Templars' custody in divers boxes "under the secret seal."<sup>1</sup> These boxes may have been secured from observation by a *cachet* called the secret seal, but the privy seal might equally well have been used for that purpose, and secret seal here may be simply a variant for privy seal. Whatever is the real explanation, it would be rash to argue from an isolated occurrence.

Among the chancery warrants, towards the end of the reign of Edward I., we find not only writs of privy seal properly so called, but various documents transmitted by the king to his chancellor, as means of helping him to draft the instrument which the writ of privy seal had ordered him to prepare. Conspicuous among these enclosures are the petitions which gave rise to the writ of privy seal. It often saved trouble to transmit a lengthy petition along with a short writ of privy seal directing the chancellor to base his letters or writ upon the petition. The first petition preserved among the chancery warrants owes its preservation to such circumstances.<sup>2</sup>

No sooner had the fashion of transmitting enclosures become common than the habit of sealing up these enclosures under the secret seal was formed. The first surviving example of this is found in a writ of October 6, 1291, in which Edward I. informed his chancellor that Oliver Sutton, bishop of Lincoln, had ap-

<sup>1</sup> Above, i. 290 and n. 1. *C.P.R.*, 1232-47, p. 81.

<sup>2</sup> *C.W.* 2/121. The writ of privy seal is *ib.* 2/120: "Rex dilectis clericis suis," etc., ordering "quod, inspecta petitione interclusa, scribatis justiciariis Hibernie tenorem responsionis quam invenietis in dorso petitionis predictae." This is dated Carnarvon, August 13, 1283; cf. 2/171 which encloses 2/172, letters patent of the nuns of Godstow, dated November 1283; cf. *ib.* 3/235, 246, "litteras quas vobis mittimus presentibus interclusas," and 4/318.



pointed an abbot of St. Mary's in the Fields, Leicester, by his letters patent, *quas vobis transmittimus sigillo nostro secreto consignatas*.<sup>1</sup> Other similar examples survive from only a slightly later date.<sup>2</sup> Subsequently, we have evidence of a similar practice in France, but there the seal used as a *cachet* for enclosures was the ordinary *secretum*, the French equivalent for the English king's privy seal.<sup>3</sup>

We have not sufficient evidence to determine whether the secret seal thus employed as a *cachet* was, or was not, the same as the privy seal. None of the early enclosures bears clear traces of the imprint of a seal, and although some of the later ones do, the impress is exactly the same size, namely 1 inch, as the privy seal of Edward I.<sup>4</sup> A further difficulty arises from the fact that,

<sup>1</sup> *C.W.* 4/357. There may have been an earlier instance of the same practice in a writ quoted in Avesbury, pp. 291-294, dated 1291. It is addressed by Edward I. to the dean and chapter of St. Paul's, and enclosed letters of submission by the Scots, sent "sub sigillo secretarii nostri presentibus appenso." The writ, tested by the treasurer, looks like an exchequer writ. Perhaps the formula should rather run "sub sigillo secreto nostro," or "nostri secreti." It is hard to conceive of a secretary keeping a seal in 1291, unless it be the privy seal.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* 4/380, "Edwardus, etc., cancellario, etc. Quia recepimus homagium dilecti et fidelis nostri Radulphi de Gorges pro terris et tenementis de quibus Elena de Gorges defuncta, que de nobis tenuit in capite, fuit saisita in dominico suo ut de feodo die quo obiit, eo quod idem Radulphus proximus heres eius est, et plene etatis existit, prout nobis constat per recordum inquisitionis inde facte quam nobis sub sigillo vestro transmisistis, et quam vobis remittimus sigillo nostro secreto consignatam, vobis mandamus quod per breue nostrum magno sigillo nostro consignatum, terras et tenementa predicta prefato Radulpho sine dilatione deliberari mandetis, prout in casu consimili alias fieri consuevit. Datum sub priuato sigillo nostro apud Farndon, v. die Martii, anno regni nostri vicesimo" (March 5, 1292); cf. *ib.* 5/384, 389, 394, 396 and 401.

<sup>3</sup> *Ordonnances des rois de France*, i. 670, from a household ordinance of Philip V. of November 16, 1318, which commands that the receivers of letters of request for justices "bailleront a celi de nos chambellans qui portera le seel de nostre secret, et il les enclosera sous iceluy seal."

<sup>4</sup> *C.W.* 20/1883, an inquest forwarded, "sigillo nostro secreto signatam," December 29, 1300. This has a 25 mm. seal print on the back; *ib.* 2023 a letter of the canons of Northampton, dated January 7, 1300, forwarded along with no. 2032, "sigillo nostro secreto signatas," which also seems to have had a 25 mm. seal on its back; *ib.* nos. 2058 and 2059. Later instances tell the same ambiguous tale, e.g. *C.W.* 53/5259 (33 Ed. I.); *ib.* 55/5464, a petition transmitted "sigillo nostro secreto signatam," dated March 6, 1306, has on its back a 24 mm. red seal imprint, exactly the same size as the privy seal imprint on no. 5463. So also have *ib.* 56/5532 and 5533 dated November 18, 1306. Not only the "secret seal" of the king was thus used, but those of individual magnates or officials were similarly employed as a *cachet*. For an instance see *Rôles Gascons*, iii. 342-343, where Edward I. asks his brother Edmund of Lancaster, then his lieutenant in Gascony, to transmit certain documents to the count

numerous as are the surviving documents transmitted under the secret seal, there are also a fair number of enclosures forwarded under the privy seal. For example, on November 3, 1300, the king sent from Carlisle to his chancellor *quandam inquisitionem priuato sigillo nostro consignatam*, and later on a number of other inquisitions were similarly transmitted.<sup>1</sup> Among them was one sent *sigillo nostro secreto consignatam*.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, a writ of 1293, ordering the chancellor to seal with the great seal certain letters *inclusas presentibus secreto sigillo nostro signatis*, is definitely described as *sub dicto sigillo nostro priuato*.<sup>3</sup>

Sir Henry Maxwell-Lyte regards the writ last quoted as settling the question,<sup>4</sup> but it is, perhaps, unsafe to throw the weight of proof on a single instance. My own conclusion is that, in the face of such obscure and conflicting testimony, it is impossible to say definitely that there existed in the latter years of Edward I. a secret seal which was different from the privy seal. The probability leans slightly in favour of privy and secret still being two names for the same thing, as they certainly were under John and Henry III.<sup>5</sup> If there was a separate secret seal, it was used exclusively as a *cachet*.

Under Edward II. our doubts as to the identity of the secret and privy seal become gradually resolved.<sup>6</sup> It is true that some confusion of privy and secret continues throughout the reign, and that there are notable instances of it in the manifestos of the

of Savoy and others, "per litteras patentes, vestro et eorundem consulendorum sigillis pendentibus sigillatas et postmodum sub vestro sigillo secreto interclusas." Here a document under pendant seal is hidden away under secret seal.

<sup>1</sup> *C.W.* 22/2189b; cf. *ib.* 22/2193, Nov. 7, 1300, which speaks of a transcript having been sent to the chancellor "desouz nostre priue seal." *Ib.* 22/2208a relates to an inquest sent "priuato sigillo nostro consignatam" from Rose Castle, Nov. 15, 1300 (this has a 25 mm. seal on the back). *Ib.* 22/2208d, dated Oct. 14, 1300, relates to inquests "priuato nostro sigillo consignatas." *Ib.* 22/2210, dated Nov. 15, 1300, relates to an inquisition "priuato sigillo nostro consignatam."

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* 22/2211a. This is dated Nov. 16, 1300, the day after the date of 22/2210.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* 5/421.

<sup>4</sup> "This appears to be decisive as to the identity of the secret seal with the privy seal in 1293"; Maxwell-Lyte, p. 101.

<sup>5</sup> They meant the same also in May 1300, when Ralph Stokes, clerk of the great wardrobe, produced before the fair-court of St. Ives, "aliam literam patentem secreto sigillo domini regis signatam"; Gross, *Select Cases on the Law Merchant*, i. 76, Selden Soc.

<sup>6</sup> See also above ii. 291-292, 297, 324-325.

baronial opposition. Thus the barons, in their well-known assembly at Sherburn in Elmet, in 1321, drew up a document in which they spoke of the *custos sigilli secreti*, when it is perfectly certain that they meant the keeper of the privy seal.<sup>1</sup> And a little later, in July 1321, the articles against the Despensers accused them of appointing as *secreti sigilli custos* Robert Baldock,<sup>2</sup> whom we know to have been then keeper of the privy seal. Moreover, during the early years of Edward II. a large number of documents were transmitted from king to chancellor enclosed under the privy seal.

A new type of document is seen in 1312-13, and may well have had an earlier origin. Examples are extant in the series of chancery warrants which now begins with file 1328. This file 1328 is exclusively devoted to "warrants under the secret seal." The earliest in date are five writs of the sixth year of Edward II., July 1312 to July 1313. These are followed by the more numerous warrants of the immediately succeeding years. The first of the series is a mandate of the king to the chancellor, Walter Reynolds, bishop of Worcester, that he should amend letters, presenting clerks to certain benefices, in accordance with the changes which the king had made in letters already sent by the chancellor for the royal approval. It is *donez souz nostre secre seal au parc de Windesores*, and dated February 8, 1313.<sup>3</sup> There are a sufficient number of documents so authenticated in the immediately subsequent months to show that this was no isolated phenomenon.<sup>4</sup>

In appearance and method of fastening, writs and letters of secret seal are exactly similar to the ordinary privy seals of the period. Yet three circumstances make it demonstrable that this "secret seal" was something different from the privy seal.

<sup>1</sup> Bridlington, p. 63.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* pp. 66-67. This usage did not quite die out till the end of the fourteenth century; see below, p. 177.

<sup>3</sup> *C.W.* 1328/1. It is worth noting here that the detailed wages of "nuncio" bearing letters in the period February-July 1311, contain no reference to "letters under secret seal"; *MS. Tanner*, 197. In 1313 they were a novelty.

<sup>4</sup> The distribution of instruments under "secret seal" in the file is nos. 1-5, 6, *Ed. II.*; nos. 6-34, 7 *Edw. II.*; nos. 35-104, 8 *Ed. II.*; nos. 105-111, 9 *Ed. II.*; nos. 112-114, 10 *Ed. II.*; nos. 115-126, 11 *Ed. II.*; but a large number are under the seal of the queen and other persons, for example of "our dear valet," Oliver of Bordeaux. Some examples of these are printed in Déprez. See also *A.C.* xlv. nos. 176, 177, 207, for correspondence with the earl of Pembroke in 1313, *et seq.*



Firstly, the size of the seal is not the same. We have seen Edward II.'s privy seal was 28-30 mm. in diameter. The impressions of his secret seal vary from 26-28 mm., so that while they cannot always be clearly distinguished from impressions of the privy seal, they are, as a rule, slightly smaller.<sup>1</sup>

If, however, a matter of 2 mm. is a difference rather too fine for certainty, the second circumstance admits of no doubt whatever. The same file contains a writ under the secret seal, dated May 13, 1318, addressed to the keeper of the privy seal, instructing him to draw up "such letters as are appropriate" to announce to the monks of St. Augustine's, Canterbury, that the king has given to one of his clerks a corrody which Robert Conseye, deceased, had held in their house.<sup>2</sup> This is manifestly an order to draw up a letter under the privy seal, and cannot, therefore, have been authenticated by that seal. Yet conclusive as is its testimony, we are further bewildered by finding an undoubted writ of secret seal ordering the chancellor, on June 15, 1322, to draw up a letter under the great seal granting Ralph Basset of Drayton the manors of Hambleden and Market Overton, Rutland,<sup>3</sup> forfeited by Bartholomew Badlesmere. In the patent roll of the year this patent is described as originating "by privy seal."<sup>4</sup> So it looks as if the chancery officials still did not think the difference between privy and secret seals sufficiently important to take pains to avoid confusing the one with the other. Again, on the same file is a writ of secret seal, dated at Yarm, October

<sup>1</sup> M. Déprez says (*op. cit.* p. 74): "Le diamètre du sceau (secret) 0·035 est plus petit que celui du sceau privé." The fact is precise, but the measurement of the seal at this date is erroneous. In the same passage M. Déprez, as often elsewhere, attributes certain characteristics to the secret seal without noting specifically that they are equally true of the privy seal.

<sup>2</sup> *C.W.* 1328/4686. See, for the text, above, ii. 297.

<sup>3</sup> *C.W.*, 1329/6053.

<sup>4</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1321-24, p. 135. The patent, arising from another secret seal act of June 14 (*C.W.* 1329/6052), is rightly enrolled as "by writ of secret seal"; *C.P.R.*, 1321-24, p. 133, and indeed doubly enrolled, for the act of *ib.* pp. 183-184 clearly also refers to the same document. It is possible that there was also a privy seal drawn up, as there certainly was sometimes (*e.g.* *C.W.* 1330/4772 is a secret seal of August 5, 1321, dated Clipstone and addressed to the chancellor, which gave rise to a patent, also dated August 5, 1321, described as warranted "by privy seal" in *C.P.R.*, 1330-34, p. 164). The original letter of secret seal refers the chancellor for further particulars to a letter of privy seal "sicome apiert plus plement par lettres souz nostre priue seal queles vous en vendront." Clearly then a letter of privy seal was sent to the chancellor as well as the writ of secret seal.

7, 1322, addressed to Baldock, only described as archdeacon of Middlesex, but actually keeper of the privy seal at the time, ordering him to direct the keepers of the great seal to prepare a writ to restore certain contrariant lands to a repentant clerical rebel.<sup>1</sup> This privy seal is not, so far as I know, in existence, but a letter close, dated at the same place and day, instructs the keepers of contrariant lands in Wiltshire to make this restitution. This writ is warranted "by the king on the information of Master Robert Baldock." It is curious that no secret seal warranty should be mentioned. The phrase rather suggests that Baldock either sent the secret seal to the chancery or saved himself trouble by repeating the order by word of mouth.

The third certain proof of the secret and privy seals being now different is the fact that, on July 19, 1314, Edward II., then at York, issued writs under his secret seal, though on the same day he was forced to issue writs of privy seal under the privy seal of queen Isabella, because his own privy seal was not available,<sup>2</sup> being in fact in the hands of the Scots. Clearly Edward II. had his secret seal with him when he had not his privy seal.

During the next few years the differentiation between secret and privy seals becomes even clearer. The keepership of the privy seal was now, as we have seen, a definite office, and the long tenure of it by Robert Baldock, archdeacon of Middlesex, supplies several examples of the separation of the two small seals from each other. The earliest instance is a writ under secret seal, dated June 15, 1322, in which Edward II. instructed his "dear clerk" Baldock to draw up letters addressed to the sheriffs of Oxon. and Bucks. to seize a certain malefactor.<sup>3</sup> The implication is here obvious that Baldock was being ordered, as keeper, to issue a writ of privy seal to that effect. This mandate was soon followed by the first document which, on the face of it, is necessarily a writ under secret seal ordering the keeper of the

<sup>1</sup> *C.W.* 1329/59; see below, p. 168.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* 1328/56, 57; July 19, York, "datum sub secreto sigillo nostro," and "donne souz nostre seal secret"; and *ib.* 58, July 19, York, "datum sub priuato sigillo Isabelle regine Anglie, consortis nostre carissime, priuato sigillo nostro a nobis remoto." This file contains many writs authenticated thus by Isabella's privy seal.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* 1329/6055. The regnal year is not given, but the presence of the king at Hathelseye, where an undoubted act of 1322 also dated June 15 (*ib.* 6053) was issued, makes the year pretty certain.

privy seal to draw up a writ of privy seal in order to procure a writ under the great seal. This is the writ of October 7, 1322, to which we have just referred.<sup>1</sup> Three years later, a writ of secret seal associated the chancellor himself, Baldock, with the keeper of the privy seal in drawing up a letter of privy seal.<sup>2</sup>

Clearly, then, in the latter part of Edward II.'s reign the secret seal was in constant use. Perhaps its most significant appearance was on documents dealing with matters which the king specially wished to be carried through for personal reasons. Thus, in 1324, Edward sent a writ of secret seal to the barons of the exchequer, in the course of which he informed them that he wrote under the secret seal in order that they might know he had the particular business nearly at heart.<sup>3</sup> Nor was it only for such purposes that Edward II. used the secret seal where his father would have used the privy seal. Ordinary mandates of original force were in Baldock's days largely authenticated by secret seal. Thus, in 1322 and 1323, we find the king communicating directly under secret seal with the pope, with the bishop of Winchester, who was at Avignon, with the queen, with his niece, lady Despenser, and her husband, the younger Hugh, his chamberlain, with the officers of the crown and household, and with the merchants of the society of the Bardi.<sup>4</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> Above, p. 167. It is, perhaps, worth transcribing for its form, if not for its substance. "Edward," etc., "a nostre cher clerc, mestre Robert de Baldok, ercediakne de Middlesex, saluz. Nous vous mandons qe par lettres souz nostre priue seal facez maunder en couenable forme as gardeins de nostre graunt seal, quils, par bref souz meisme nostre seal, facent maunder au viscounte de Wiltes. et a Robert de Hungerford, gardeins des terres forfeites a nous en dit countez, qe des deux carues de terre od les appurtenances en Lye et Bisshopestre en meisme le counte, les queux Johan de Bradeford, chappelein, ad purchace a terme de sa vie du priour de Farlegh' et de l'abbesse de Lacok pur un certain rendant par an, et les queux sont pris en nostre mein par lencheson qe le dit Johan estoit adheraunt (*aherdaunt* in ms.) a Thomas Mauduyt, jadis nostre enemy et rebel, il facent oster nostre mein et soeffrent le dit Johan meisme la terre tenir, come il fist deuant tange ils en eint autre mandement de nous. Donne souz nostre secre seal a Yarm, le vii<sup>e</sup> jour de Octobre, lan de nostre regne xviii<sup>e</sup>."

<sup>2</sup> *C.W.* 1329/7087, "Edward to R. de Baldock and H. de Clif," dated April 2, 1325. This is printed in Déprez, *op. cit.* pp. 76-77. It is additional evidence of the effort made by Baldock to combine the privy seal with the chancery. See above, ii. 308-309 and *Pl. Edward II.* pp. 166-168.

<sup>3</sup> *M.R.K.R.* 97, breu. dir. bar., Hil. term, m. 11d. (Feb. 19, 1314), "Et qe vous sachez qe nous auons ceste busoigne a cuer, nous vous escriuons souz nostre secre seal."

<sup>4</sup> *MS. Stowe*, 553/87, 94b, 106b, 130; *MS. Ad.* 995/34.



secret seal was equally commonly employed, alternately or conjointly, with the privy seal for warranty work. Thus it set in motion the machinery which was to result in a writ of great seal for presentations to churches, commissions of *oyer* and *terminer*, grants of safe conduct and the like. When used conjointly, it simply added to the complication of an already cumbersome machine, and the fact that a large proportion of secret seal chancery warrants are simply mandates to the keeper of the privy seal to send an instrument under his seal to the chancellor to issue a writ of great seal, shows that this increase of elaboration was now usual.<sup>1</sup> No doubt the new step added to the fees paid by seekers after writs, and was, therefore, favoured by the official. It enabled the king to dash off a short letter, enclosing with it the bill or petition that had reached him, and leaving it to the office of privy seal to do the rest. Yet in many ways the only excuse for such vain repetition can be that the keeper of the privy seal was so often away from the king's person that he was, like the chancellor, in constant need of receiving instructions from his master in writing. Sometimes he was so closely associated with the chancellor that, as in the example quoted above,<sup>2</sup> one mandate under secret seal addressed to the two of them was enough. Had that state of things continued, there would have been much to be said for realising Baldock's ideal of fusing great and privy seals in a common secretariat. It incidentally follows that the place of issue of a writ of privy seal was no longer good evidence for determining the king's whereabouts, any more than was the place date of a writ of chancery.

What were the reasons for the emergence of this secret seal, which was not a privy seal, in the reign of Edward II.? The general political reasons have been dealt with already in previous volumes.<sup>3</sup> We must be careful, however, not to assign to any one cause what was the result of a variety of converging motives. A main cause was doubtless the removal of the privy seal from the care of the controller of the wardrobe to that of a keeper *ad hoc*, by the 1311

<sup>1</sup> C.W. 1336/44, a letter of secret seal, may be transcribed as an instance. "Depar le roy. Nous vous mandons qe sur la bille quelle nous enuoions a vous close dedesuz cestes, facez faire lettres souz nostre priue seal directes a nostre chancellier, si especiales come vous purrez, solom ce qe la ley le voudra soeffrir. Done souz nostre secre scal a nostre park de Wodestok, le xv. jour daugust."

<sup>2</sup> Above, p. 168.

<sup>3</sup> Above, ii. 291, 324-325.

ordinances. This step had the more far-reaching effect since, as we have seen, the special keeper was, in the critical years following the ordinances, constrained to abide constantly in London with his clerks, in close attendance on the ordainers, and on the council which carried on their traditions. Naturally, in such circumstances, the king felt the need of a seal directly under his personal control. He, therefore, devised a new seal, an invention all the easier because of the already existing signet of the French court, and strove with all his power to make it replace the old privy seal, the control of which he despaired of recovering.

There is no evidence, that we know of, of documents sealed with this secret seal before 6 Edward II., July 1312–July 1313, that is to say, until after the separation of the keepership of the privy seal from the controllership of the wardrobe.<sup>1</sup> But another circumstance must not be forgotten. The expansion and the strengthening of the king's chamber, was, as we have seen already, the chief protective measure taken by Edward and his friends against the ordainers. Now the secret seal was certainly in later times the seal of the chamber, and if it is not over-rash to attribute policy to Edward II. and his early favourites, the growth of the secret seal and the growth of the chamber may surely be co-ordinated aspects of that policy.<sup>2</sup>

We know little of the nature and description of the early secret seal. That it was always impressed on red wax goes without saying, for red wax was invariably used for all small seals. That its impression suggests a slightly smaller seal than the privy seal we have already remarked. Fortunately there still survive, on a writ of secret seal of 1314, crumbling relics of wax which indicate a seal one inch in diameter, and show a man on horseback within Gothic tracery. The legend may be read with good probability as SIGILLU[M] SECRETU[M] D[OMI]N[I] REGIS EDWARDI.<sup>3</sup> Despite the Latin legend of the matrix, the surviving writs of Edward II.'s secret seal are all written in French.

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 165.

<sup>2</sup> See below, pp. 178-181.

<sup>3</sup> I have supplied in square brackets the letters necessary to extend the contracted inscription of the seal. Maxwell-Lyte, p. 102, first revealed the existence of this seal from a writ now in *Ancient Deeds*, WS. 572. Compare *A.C.* 49/20, 21. For early "secreta" in other lands, see Chap. XVI. § 4. They are analogous to our privy seals; our "secretum" approaches the foreign signets.

Under Edward III. the secret seal had a fluctuating history. During the greater part of his minority there is no evidence that he possessed such a seal.<sup>1</sup> The secret seal might naturally have disappeared with the chamber estate and other innovations of the Despensers. But Edward III. began to revive the power of the chamber before his minority was ended, and the secret seal had reappeared even earlier than the signs of renewed chamber activity are discernible. Gradually it assumed five different shapes :

I. The first form of Edward III.'s secret seal belongs to the latter part of the minority. It is met with on a few documents, two of which survive among the chancery warrants. The later one is dated October 7, 1330, and bears on its dorse the impression of a seal of 25 mm. in diameter.<sup>2</sup> There is no evidence that this matrix was used after that date.

II. The second secret seal of Edward III. is first met with on a letter of August 5, 1331, and remained in use up to April 18, 1338, at least.<sup>3</sup> It was an exceedingly small seal of only 10 mm., and was probably actually a signet ring of the king's.<sup>4</sup> With its appearance there are signs that the secret seal, like the privy seal before it, was working out a diplomatic of its own, tending towards informality and simplicity. The earliest documents sealed by this second secret seal of Edward III. are more like a

<sup>1</sup> "It is very doubtful whether he had any secret seal during the first year or two of his reign"; Maxwell-Lyte, p. 103.

<sup>2</sup> *C.W.* 1330/2.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* 1330/3; and (old numbers) 10, 741; 10, 748; 10, 764.

<sup>4</sup> Maxwell-Lyte, p. 103. Compare p. 105, quoting from the patent roll the discharge to Robert Mildenhall, keeper of the privy wardrobe in the Tower, in respect to articles in his charge delivered by command to the king or elsewhere. "Une pierre quarre dun saphir ewage oue un chialrot oue un toret dor pour ycel, lequel estoit nostre secrete seal, liuere a Richard de Grymesby (1351)" printed in *C.P.R.*, 1350-54, p. 129. This looks like the surrender of an obsolete signet, or rather its despatch to Grimsby, a goldsmith, for alteration. I suspect that the reference is to this 1331-38 signet, kept by Mildenhall, who was a chamber as well as a privy wardrobe officer (see above, iv. 452-454), and we know that the secret seal was the seal of the chamber. If my surmise is correct, then it is noteworthy that, despite its smaller size, the seal of 1331-38, like the secret seal of 1314 (see above, p. 170), contained the figure of a man on horseback. This would mean that the secret seal had its definite type, the man on horseback, just as the privy seal represented the royal arms. The Latin version of "saphir ewage" (see Mildenhall's "recepta jocalium" in *E.A.* 392/14) is "saphir aquaticus." "Saphir d'cau" is a term still used by French jewellers for the paler varieties of the gem stone called iolite.



friendly note than a formal writ,<sup>1</sup> and soon the type came to be described as letters. Like the informal letters of privy seal,<sup>2</sup> these secret seal letters were prefaced by the phrase *Depar le roi* written at the head in a line all to itself. The enumeration of the royal titles and the name and office of the addressee were replaced by the formula *Saluz et bon amur*, or *Reuerent piere en Dieu*, or *Tres cher et foial*. Not infrequently the conclusion omitted the regnal year, running in form *done souz nostre secre seal a Clipston le v<sup>e</sup> jour Daugst*. These letters, and the writs of secret seal, were folded, encircled by a tag, and later slit, like contemporary privy seal writs and letters other than letters patent; they had the seal applied in the same place, and they would be opened in the same way.<sup>3</sup> The omission of the address was compensated wholly or partially by the direction written on the tag. A letter dated March 13, 1335, has on the tag the words *Al euesqe de Duresme, nostre chaunceller. Par le roi*.<sup>4</sup> Later on the letters became even less formal, not to say curt, for the phrase *Saluz et bon amur* was sometimes shortened to *Saluz*, the briefly stated reason for writing was often dispensed with, the order was expressed in the imperative, and not infrequently the initial *Depar le roi* was left out. Quite evidently no hard and fast rule was observed.

Side by side with instruments thus phrased, older fashions of composition persisted.<sup>5</sup> In the early part of the reign a good many writs of secret seal still recited all the king's titles, and the greeting to the recipient similarly rehearsed his name and dignities. They invariably concluded with the formula "given at," followed by the place of origin and the full date, and were obviously based upon the ordinary writ of privy seal. When addressed to the keeper of the privy seal or to the chancellor, they left the office concerned little to do except to copy out the document received, or to translate its substance. The writ of secret seal, however, rapidly fell out of use, the last known to Sir Henry Maxwell-Lyte

<sup>1</sup> I quote from Maxwell-Lyte, p. 103, who prints in full the earliest example (*C.W.* 1330/3) of this new secret seal. In the other text printed by Sir Henry, pp. 103-104 (*ib.* 1330/8), the regnal year is also given.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 115.

<sup>3</sup> See above, pp. 116-120.

<sup>4</sup> Maxwell-Lyte, p. 104, from *C.W.* 1330/8.

<sup>5</sup> Maxwell-Lyte, pp. 108-109; see *C.W.* 1330/49.

being dated November 18, 1352.<sup>1</sup> It was superseded by the type of letter we have just described. The third form of communication under secret seal was the "bill," identical with the bill of privy seal,<sup>2</sup> except that, when the bill took the form of an addition to a petition, the seal was sometimes affixed on the back.<sup>3</sup> In the latter part of Edward III.'s reign secret seal documents began to be written on paper, but the use of paper was so unusual that the chancery sometimes thought it worth while to record the fact.<sup>4</sup> Perhaps the increased intimacy of relations with Aquitaine and Spain, where paper had long been in common use, was responsible for its more frequent employment in England.

During the currency of this second secret seal of Edward III. the word signet began to be used officially as a synonym for secret seal. Thus, on November 14, 1337, a mandate to chancellor Robert Stratford, instructing him to draw up letters of acquittance under the great seal in favour of Nicholas de la Beche, is described as *done souz nostre signet*.<sup>5</sup> Yet the form of the writ is precisely that of the ordinary secret seal writ sealed with the 10 mm. secret seal, the trace of the wax is the exact size of that seal, and the enrolment of the letters patent issued in pursuance recorded the warrant for them as *per breue de priuato sigillo*,<sup>6</sup> the

<sup>1</sup> Maxwell-Lyte, p. 109; it is in *C.W.* 1333/51.

<sup>2</sup> See above, pp. 113-114.

<sup>3</sup> See *Anc. Pet.* nos. 9250 and 11354 (Maxwell-Lyte, p. 108 and n.), but cf. *ib.* 11334.

<sup>4</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1361-67, p. 321; "by letter of secret seal on paper." Examples of "secret seals" on paper are to be found in *C.W.* 1334/51, "priué signet," and in *ib.* 1336. Later on paper almost replaced parchment for signet letters.

<sup>5</sup> *C.W.* 1330/44. This writ has the "old number" of 10,416. It is not very easy to give exact references to these files. The "old numbers" refer to series now broken up and are now in no wise consecutive. The more recent plan of numbering the items of each file consecutively and separately had not been fully carried out when most of my notes were made nearly twenty years ago. Even the existing arrangement of writs under the signet and other small seals leaves something to be desired. Some of the documents are really privy seals, as, for instance, 1331/21, and others, such as 1330/1, are given under the seal of G. Talbot. But 1330/19, under William Montague's seal, "because we have not our privy seal with us," or 1330/35, under Henry Ferrars' seal, "because we have no seal near us," approach, though somewhat irregularly, the secret seal type. File 1331 has also its confusions, 1331/21 (August 26, 17 Ed. III. i.e. 1343) having, for instance, the 38 mm. privy seal upon it. Of course, it may have been stamped by the privy seal later, and be a secret seal instrument after all, or "secret" may have been used inadvertently instead of "privy." Many documents on these files are informal letters of secret seal.

<sup>6</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1334-38, p. 553.

phrase which the conservative chancery preferred to signet as an alternative description of the secret seal. It may, therefore, be safely inferred that "our signet" is here simply an equivalent expression for "our secret seal." This is not the first time the term signet was applied to the secret seal. As far back as 1329, before the second form of the secret seal of Edward III. had been adopted, Edward III., in a letter to John XXII., requested the pope to give credence only to certain privy seal and signet letters as expressing his real wishes, in terms which can only mean that signet letter, even at that date, was an alternative expression for letter of secret seal.<sup>1</sup> It is not impossible that the resemblance of this second secret seal of Edward III. to a signet ring may have made the indifferent use of the terms "secret seal" and "signet" more natural.

III. The inconveniently small size of the 1331-38 secret seal matrix may well have precipitated the adoption of a larger one, the first surviving impression of which is on a document dated Ghent, November 22, 1339, not long before the king's assumption of the title of King of France.<sup>2</sup> This seal, though quite small, was about half as large again as its predecessor, being 15 mm. instead of 10 mm.<sup>3</sup> It was, apparently, used for a great many years, from 1338 to 1354, and if, as is probable, it resembled earlier secret seals in not being inscribed with the king's titles, there was no necessity for it to be changed when Edward began to call himself king of France and England. The great and privy seals had to be changed because of the legends they bore, if for no other reason. While generally referred to as the secret seal to begin with, it was not uncommonly called the signet, although there was given, upon occasion, an apology or explanation for the use of the latter term. There was also, as earlier, often a definite implication that the signet was a natural vehicle for expressing the personal wish of the king. Thus, in 1342, when Edward promised that the second baron of the Dublin exchequer should

<sup>1</sup> *E.H.R.* xxvi. 332. See also above, iii. 28.

<sup>2</sup> *C.W.* 1330/51. Unluckily the year is not given, but the day, month and place make it fairly certain.

<sup>3</sup> It is the same size as one of the signets of Richard II. in the centre panel of which was engraved a crown. Richard seems to have had at least two, and possibly three, matrices so engraved, though whether they were used concurrently or only consecutively, is not certain; see below, pp. 202-203.



not be lightly removed from office, he sent to the Dublin office a writ in which he declared that the baron was not to be removed "without the king's special mandate under his seal called signet."<sup>1</sup> Towards the end of its course, on the other hand, this seal was more often described as the signet and only rarely as the secret seal.

IV. The fourth secret seal of Edward III. is first found on a letter sent, on July 16, 1354, from the king to bishop Trelech of Hereford. In it Trelech's attention was specially called to the new seal of which the king wished him in future to take cognisance.<sup>2</sup> Another letter, dated Lyndhurst, July 23, 1354, was *done souz nostre nouvel signet*.<sup>3</sup> This new signet is, even more certainly than its predecessor, demonstrably identical with the secret seal, for a third letter, dated July 27, at Clarendon, only four days later than the second of the two documents we have just cited, was "given under the secret seal," while in the body of the letter the seal with which it was going to be authenticated was described as *cesti nostre signet*.<sup>4</sup> From this date until the end of 1367, this

<sup>1</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1340-43, p. 311. Compare *E.A.* 391/1/1d., "per quamdam litteram de sigillo suo de signat' (sic)" (1346), or *ib.* 391/4 and *Pipe* 194/43 (1374), "sigillum vocatum le signet."

<sup>2</sup> *Registrum* J. de Trillek, pp. 224-225, C. and Y. Soc.

<sup>3</sup> *C.W.* 1334/3. The year is conjectural, but Edward III. was at Lyndhurst on July 23, 1354. It is probably in reference to this seal that M. Déprez says (*op. cit.* p. 88) "vers 1355 commence à apparaître le signet." This is a considerable post dating.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* 1334/4. I transcribe the letter, which is also printed in Maxwell-Lyte, pp. 105-106. "Depar le roi. Reuerent piere en Dieu. Nous auoms done a nostre cher cler Richard de Thorne la prouende del auter de seint Estephene en Beuerle, pur quele il lui couient pleeder en nostre droit. Si voloms et vous mandoms qe nulle ratificacion en soit faite pur nul mandement qe vous est venuz ou purra venir, souz nul de noz sealx nen autre manere, si ce ne soit souz cesti nostre signet. Done souz nostre secre seal a Claryndon, le xxvii jour de Juyl." This important text conclusively proves the identity of the new signet with the secret seal. Most probably this was the secret seal for which a chain of gold was paid for on December 16, 1356; *I.R.* 384/4 "eidem Johanni (i.e. de Cicestria) fabro Londonensi, pro una cathena de auro, ponderis xvi nobilium Florentinorum, empta pro secreto sigillo, x li. vi s. viii d." A long chain was commonly attached to these "seals of one piece" to prevent them from being lost, and to facilitate their being carried about and used. Compare *E.A.* 394/16/14, a roll of liveries from the great wardrobe, "Eidem (i.e. Ricardo de Kareswell' cissori domini nostri regis) in cameram domini nostri regis pro sigillo suo secreto imponendo unum loculum de Roo"; this was in 1363-64. The chancery warrant quoted illustrates clearly the use of this seal to authenticate the special personal acts of the king, and, with *C.W.* 1334/3, seems to suggest that this signet was a novelty requiring explanation in July 1354. It is almost implied that acts authenticated by it should

seal authenticated a large number of instruments indifferently described as issued under the signet, or under the secret seal. The seal is also called *nostre priue signet* on March 3, 1361,<sup>1</sup> *nostre signet seal* on July 19 of the same year,<sup>2</sup> and *le signet de nostre anel* on April 13, 1362.<sup>3</sup> The chancery, moreover, continued until 1366 to record instruments warranted by this seal as authorised *per litteram de priuato sigillo*. Then it began to describe the warrant as *litteram de sigillo vocato le signet*, and finally as *litteram de signeto*.<sup>4</sup>

The new signet, or secret seal, was 25 mm., or one inch, in diameter, rather different in size and type from the minute secret seals of 10 mm. We are fortunate in the survival, in the Public Record Office, of three examples of the new signet.<sup>5</sup> The centre is an oblong panel of  $\frac{1}{2}$  by  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch bearing the figure of a horseman, surrounding which are fleurs-de-lys within Gothic tracery. The legend is *SIGNETUM REGIS ANGLIE ET FRANCIE*.<sup>6</sup>

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override those sealed with the ancient and constitutional seals. On August 18, 1363, Urban V., writing to Edward III. with regard to a request for certain irregularities to be condoned, says, "As the pope sees by the king's secret seal (*signo secreto*) that he has the matter much at heart, he will grant the request if possible"; *C. Pap. Reg. Let.* iv. 3. This is a striking instance of the personal character of the new seal. "Signum" may perhaps be better translated "signet" than "seal."

<sup>1</sup> *C.W.* 1334/53.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* 1335/1, no. 1. This was originally written "Done souz nostre secret seal," but a contemporary hand struck out "secret seal" and wrote over it "signet." Another proof of the identity of the two terms.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* 1335/50; cf. *Ancient Deeds*, A. 13,638. There is a letter of Sept. 1, 1372, in *C.W.* 1336/32, "done souz le signet de nostre anel en nostre nief appelle la Gracedieu en les dounes." The "signet of our ring" may well have been a different matrix from "our signet seal."

<sup>4</sup> Maxwell-Lyte, p. 107.

<sup>5</sup> Maxwell-Lyte, p. 106; and *Anc. Deeds*, WS. 636, 637, 638; see below, Appendix, plate IV. no. 1.

<sup>6</sup> Douët D'Arcq, iii. no. 10,028, describes a seal of this type, 28 mm. in diameter, affixed to a letter of 1366 from Edward III. to Charles V. about the ransom of his late father, John II., and said to be sealed with "nostre secre seal." The horseman surrounded by fleurs-de-lys can easily be made out, but unluckily the legend is indistinct. One would think that, in writing to the actual possessor of the throne, Edward would hardly have used a seal describing himself as king of France. Perhaps the legend had been altered after the treaty of Calais (Maxwell-Lyte, p. 106), or more probably a replica, except for the necessary change of legend, had been made. Douët D'Arcq, iii. 10,030, mentions another signet, 30 mm. in diameter, engraved with a man's head, three-quarters to right, surrounded with arabesque and without legend (either it had been destroyed, or the matrix may not have been inscribed). This authenticated a letter of July 30, 1362, from Edward III. to John of

V. The one-inch signet of 1354 to 1367 was not the only signet or secret seal employed during these years. Side by side with it a smaller seal, more the size of the second and third secret seals of Edward III., was used. The traces of it on documents are, however, very different from the traces of those seals, for, unlike them, it was impressed on a pointed Greek or Latin cross of red wax, at the junction of the arms. This seal, or a similar one, was used for the rest of Edward III.'s reign.<sup>1</sup> But concurrent use with it of the one-inch seal became less frequent, and after a period of uncertainty, during which the old confusion between "signet" and "secret seal" obtained, it gradually appropriated to itself the name of king's signet. A process of differentiation seems to have been going on, by which the term secret seal came to indicate the one-inch seal, and the term signet the smaller seal embedded in the waxen cross. The process was, however, ended by the one-inch seal dropping out of use altogether, so that, when Edward III. died, the small signet alone remained active. This was the signet which the moribund king ordered to be affixed to his last will along with his great and privy seals, to give it all the force that a document could possess.<sup>2</sup> The history of the signet under Richard II. we have relegated to a later section all to itself. For the moment it is enough to say that the secret seal became obsolete, under that name, before Edward III.'s death. If the term were still used, it was generally in the old sense of privy seal, especially in correspondence with foreign chanceries, and in the chronicles. So long as the privy seal bore the legend *secretum regis*, such a use of the term was bound to occur. Peter Lacy was, in 1369, called in an official document *custos secreti sigilli*,<sup>3</sup> and John Fordham, in 1379, was styled "keeper of the king's secret seal," in a royal letter warranted "by letters of the king's signet ring."<sup>4</sup> Yet, in the petitions of the Gloucester

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France, asking John to pay 60,000 crowns of his ransom to the prince of Wales, and the letter is said to be "done sous le signet qe vous savez." I am unable to assign to this seal its place in the series I have attempted to describe, and it may have been a private signet, adopted by mutual agreement for confidential communication between the two kings, and therefore intelligible enough to them though puzzling to us.

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, *Anc. Pet.* 9250, 11334, 11354.

<sup>2</sup> Nichols, *Royal Wills*, p. 64.

<sup>3</sup> *Kal. and Inv. of Exchequer*, i. 222.

<sup>4</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1377-81, p. 328.



parliament of 1378, and in the answers to those petitions, the term secret seal was used when it was obvious that both estates and government meant the "signet,"<sup>1</sup> and as late as 1390, bishop Wykeham referred to the signet ring as the secret seal.<sup>2</sup> The confusion, in the latter period of Edward III.'s reign, between the two types of "secret seal" we have just considered, was probably intensified by the use of other signets than the one we have described. There were also two other "secret seals" used at different times in this reign, each of them with an independent history. They were the "secret seal called the griffin," and the mysterious seal called the *signum*, which we shall discuss in other sections of this chapter. Doubtless further investigation would add to their number, for any ring might be used to seal letters.

There is little specific information to be gathered about the custody of the secret seal of the fourteenth century. It was in precisely the same position as the privy seal of the thirteenth century. We may conjecture that the same reasons which account for the barrenness of the records of the former century as to the custody of the privy seal, account also for the silence of fourteenth century documents as to the custody of the secret seal. The privy seal in the thirteenth century and the secret seal of the fourteenth century had no organised office. The seal was the king's personal affair, and its custody was an incident of the functions of some high domestic of the household in constant attendance on his person. In the reign of John the "small seal" was regarded as especially appropriate to chamber business,<sup>3</sup> and it remained the seal of the chamber until responsibility for it passed from the chamber to the wardrobe. When, later on, the privy seal came under some measure of public control, the need of a more domestic seal was felt so acutely that another small seal, the secret seal, was set up. This happened during the very time, 1311-12, when in France the king's secret seal

<sup>1</sup> *Rot. Parl.* iii. 44, "Le roi ne voet mye qe par brief ou lettre de grant ou priue seal ou del secret seal," etc.

<sup>2</sup> *Wykeham's Register*, ii. 424, "sigillum secretum suum, videlicet annulum." Letters of secret seal were mentioned in wardrobe accounts so late as 17 Ric. II., e.g. *E.A.* 403/22, f. 17. Compare *MS. Ad.* 35, 115, f. 45, for 16 Ric. II., when, in September 1393, "nuncii" were paid for going on messages, "tam cum litteris secreti sigilli . . . quam cum litteris senescalli et thesaurarii hospicium tangentibus." In both, the signet was clearly the seal in question.

<sup>3</sup> See above, i. 103-105.

was in the custody of one of his chamberlains. The administrative evolution of the two kingdoms was so similar that we should suspect the disposition of the new "secret" seal in England to be not unlike that of the French secret seal. In earlier volumes<sup>1</sup> a few facts have been put together which strengthen that suspicion into a plausible conjecture. We may, indeed, feel convinced that the secret seal was at all times the seal of the chamber, for it came into existence just at the moment when the chamber was first strengthened in the interests of the crown, to counterbalance the establishment of baronial control over the privy seal, and was specially used in business relating to the chamber. It suffered some eclipse on the fall of the Despensers, which incidentally destroyed the system of a chamber estate, but it was revived in greater strength when Edward III. began to tread in his father's footsteps by setting aside lands for chamber administration. So successful, temporarily at least, was this policy that the resultant heavy demands on the secret seal led, in a short time, to the institution of a second chamber seal, specially for the authentication of documents dealing with the administration of the estate. This was the "secret seal called the griffin," already referred to and to be considered in our next section.<sup>2</sup> The griffin seal normally remained with the chamber office in England, while the secret seal proper itinerated with the chamber accompanying the court.<sup>3</sup> But the older secret seal suffered no real restriction of power from the concurrent use of the griffin seal. On the contrary, its scope as the general seal of the chamber was amplified.

During the years immediately following on the revival of

<sup>1</sup> See above, ii. 324-326, 360, for Edward II., and iv. 261-264, for Edward III. The special chamber seal is not unique or confined to royal households. French bishops used a special *sceau de la chambre* besides their ordinary seals; Douët d'Arcq, *Inventaires*, i. xxviii. Under Edward II. there was a king's chamber at Berwick issuing bills "under the seal of the office of the chamber in Scotland"; *C.C.R.*, 1339-41, p. 82. But the Scottish chamber was chiefly a financial office, and in view of the restricted sphere of its activity this seal corresponds somewhat to the English exchequer seal. For the universality of the commitment of the custody of the king's secret seal to a chamberlain, see also above, p. 160.

<sup>2</sup> See above, iv. 261-264, and below, pp. 181-192.

<sup>3</sup> Evidence of this is that during Edward's long absences abroad 1338-40, June-November 1340, 1342-43, no writs warranted by secret seal appear in the calendars of patent and close rolls. When the king was back in England, they reappear, though always sparingly; cf. also above, p. 175, n. 4.

the chamber estate and the establishment of the griffin seal, there is, as we know, some documentary evidence that the receiver of the chamber was also the keeper of the secret seal,<sup>1</sup> as we had more than suspected earlier. Unluckily, the first authority is the papal register, and we have often had occasion to doubt the accuracy of the Avignon chancery in giving to foreign clerks the precise official titles which they enjoyed in their own country. From this source we learn that Thomas Hatfield, receiver of the chamber from 1338 to 1344, was, in the latter year, described as clerk of the secret seal.<sup>2</sup> His successor, Robert Burton, was never given that title, but Thomas Bramber, the next receiver, was called clerk of the secret seal in 1349, in a petition sent to the pope on his behalf by the English king, who was more likely to know his correct title than a papal chancery clerk.<sup>3</sup> On the same day that Bramber was granted his canonry, another canonry went to his brother receiver, Richard Norwich, who was also described as clerk of the king's secret seal.<sup>4</sup> But there is nothing strange in this, for there were often two receivers, and they might easily assume joint-custody of the seal. Besides, Bramber was just vacating and Norwich just entering office, so that the overlap need not be a source of trouble. Direct English official evidence shows the accuracy of the papal clerks, for in the year 1353-54, the wardrobe account records a grant of robes to Norwich as clerk of the secret seal.<sup>5</sup> But just as we feel certain that we see the truth, the light fails. Although we have suggested that William Wykeham succeeded Norwich as receiver of the chamber and keeper of the secret seal,<sup>6</sup> we have no definite evidence, and after Wykeham the receivership fell into, and for the rest of the reign remained in, lay hands of comparative obscurity. In spite of the fact that the French secret seal had been kept by a layman since the days of Philip the Fair, some

<sup>1</sup> For the receivership of the chamber, see above, iv. 255-263.

<sup>2</sup> *Cal. Pap. Reg. Pet.* i. 11. He is also called "secretary" as are his successors, but that must not be stressed, as secretary was still used on occasion, in the sense of confidant.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* i. 182. It shows how little surnames derived from places suggest the place of birth or origin of the holder, that Bramber is always described as "of the diocese of Norwich."

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* i. 183. The date of the grant is October 15.

<sup>5</sup> See above, iv. 134, 262. *E.A.* 392/2 is the only household account which, to my knowledge, contains evidence of the existence of an officer whose special business was with the secret seal.

<sup>6</sup> See above, iv. 262.



positive evidence is necessary to convince us that these lay receivers kept the secret seal.

Not impossibly this period saw the growth of the official secretaryship which we find in existence, without the least suggestion of its being a novelty, soon after the accession of Richard II. By that time the secret seal had been merged in the signet. Even at the end of Edward III.'s reign, official quarters still looked on the signet with suspicion. On the eve of the meeting of the Good Parliament, chancery hesitated to enrol an appointment under the signet until it had been authenticated by the great seal,<sup>1</sup> and whoever kept the secret seal had no organised office at his disposal, but was forced to rely on outside help for some of his secretarial work.<sup>2</sup>

## SECTION II

### THE GRIFFIN SEAL

Besides the five varieties of secret seal of Edward III. described in the foregoing section, there were, as we there pointed out,<sup>3</sup> two other secret seals, the griffin and the *signum*, used for short periods during his reign, which cannot be regarded simply as different forms of the same seal. For that reason, it has seemed best to me to give special and independent consideration to them. In this section, therefore, I propose to deal with the griffin seal.

In describing the landed estate reserved by Edward III. to his chamber, I have already had occasion to say something about this seal,<sup>4</sup> which was called the griffin because it bore the effigy of a griffin, particularly fierce-looking, on an oval panel 16 mm.

<sup>1</sup> *C.F.R.* viii. 343. "And be it remembered that this letter, sealed with the king's signet, was sent to J. Knyvet, the chancellor, to be sealed with the great seal."

<sup>2</sup> *E.A.* 391/20, a payment to William Hawksworth, clerk of the chamber, of 20s., "de dono regis pro factura diuersarum commissionum et breuium tangentium cameram domini regis" (1349-50). Mildenhall, who presumably was responsible for the employment of Hawksworth on this job, was only the deputy of the absent receiver.

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 178.

<sup>4</sup> See above, iv. 276-279.

by 12 mm., within Gothic tracery. The matrix was small and oval, being roughly 24 mm.  $\times$  23 mm., less than a square inch in area, that is to say, and of course, like all household seals, it was impressed on red wax.<sup>1</sup> It was distinguished from the other royal seals by being absolutely without any legend. A short-lived "little signet" of the griffin used by Philip V.<sup>2</sup> has been suggested as a possible model for this seal, but the design may have been adopted in compliment to Edward III.'s intimate friend, William Montague, whose family arms were a griffin.<sup>3</sup> The griffin seal was first used in 1335 and continued in use until nearly the end of 1354. It was called into existence as an alternative to the secret seal. The constant absence of this seal with the king in Scotland, the North and France, during the years immediately succeeding its institution disclosed the convenience, if not the actual need, of the office controlling the chamber lands, necessarily limited to England, having a seal of its own ready to hand. It is true that under Edward II. the "secret seal" had been adequate for the business connected with the chamber estate, but Edward II. seldom left England. Besides, the privy seal was not then so much officialised as it was later. Up to 1338 the griffin was employed concurrently with the secret seal in writs affecting chamber lands.<sup>4</sup> From 1339 it aspired to a sole jurisdiction over the estate with such success that, upon occasion, the secret seal was used only as a warrant to set the griffin seal in motion.<sup>5</sup> But the fact that the griffin was warranted by secret seal implied some control of secret seal over griffin. In 1346 its sphere was technically widened to embrace all chamber business,<sup>6</sup> but the surviving writs suggest no actual extension of its scope. A certain amount of effort was also necessary to induce conservative departments of government, like the exchequer and chancery, to accept mandates under the griffin seal as equivalent in authority to those of the privy or secret seals.

<sup>1</sup> It is figured in *Durham Seals*, plate E. 10. See below, App. pl. IV. no. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Maxwell-Lyte, p. 110; Perrichet, *La Grande Chancellerie de France*, p. 399. No example of this "petit signet du roy au griffon," used in 1320, is known. It is hard to believe that a seal in use by 1335 was suggested by a griffin device of John, king of Bohemia.

<sup>3</sup> See Nicolas, *Le Siège de Karlaverok*, p. 40, where his grandfather's shield of the griffin rampant is figured; and *Archaeologia*, xlviii. 356.

<sup>4</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1338-40, p. 66.

<sup>5</sup> See also below, p. 188.

<sup>6</sup> Above, iv. 277, quoting *M.R.K.R.* b. d. b., Hil. t. 20 Ed. III.

The chancery was easier to deal with than the exchequer, and it looks as if, as early as October 1337, the king had taken steps to impress on that office its obligation to accept warrants under the griffin seal as adequate authority for the issue of writs of great seal. He sent a letter of secret seal, dated October 12, 1337, to Robert Stratford,<sup>1</sup> bishop of London, who was then chancellor, in which he informed him of the extensive reservation to the chamber of knights' fees, advowsons, escheats, forfeitures and other profits, notably in Holderness and the Isle of Wight, and ordered him henceforth to make no presentations or other letters patent or close regarding these lands, save by special royal mandate under the secret or the griffin seal. This was to give the new and the old chamber seals a concurrent jurisdiction, but it was not enough to satisfy the officers specially concerned with the chamber lands. As the time approached for the king to start with his army to the Netherlands, the men of the chamber petitioned that, since the king had appointed his griffin seal to be a warrant to the officers of the chamber and of the lands appurtenant to the chamber all over the realm, it should please him to send letters of privy seal to his chancellor

<sup>1</sup> The document is printed in Maxwell-Lyte, pp. 110-111, from *C.W.* 1336/56, without any comment or suggestion as to the year. Before I had seen the letter in print, I had conjectured (above, iv. 277, n. 3) that it had been written in the year 1341, "the first year the king was in England after the consolidation of the chamber lands." Unluckily, not having before me the text of the letter, but only some rough notes, I had not taken in the significance of the address "reuerent piere en Dieu," which certainly postulates an episcopal chancellor. But the chancellor on October 12, 1341, was Sir Robert Bourchier, a layman, who could not possibly have been so addressed. He was followed by a succession of lay chancellors, the first clerical chancellor after him being John Offord, who was the chancellor in 1346 (from October 12), 1347 and 1348. In the first two years he was only dean of Lincoln and unlikely to be called a reverend father in God. But on September 24, 1348, he was provided by the pope to the archbishopric of Canterbury, and the appointment may conceivably have been known in England eighteen days later. Or, some action may have been taken by the monks of Canterbury by virtue of a *congé d'élire* addressed to them on August 28; *C.P.R.*, 1348-50, p. 148. But Offord died of the plague before consecration in any case. Even if we assume that an unconsecrated archbishop-elect could properly be so addressed, the date is too late, for the letter describes a condition of the chamber estate outgrown before 1348. If the chancery, like the exchequer, had resisted the griffin seal, it would certainly have received communications like those addressed to the exchequer; see later, pp. 185-186. My present feeling, therefore, is that the year is most probably 1337, when Robert Stratford was chancellor. The years 1338 and 1339 are excluded because the king was abroad, and so personal a seal as the secret seal was not likely to be employed at Westminster while he was away.



instructing him that all commissions, warrants, letters and acquittances, made or about to be made under it, should be ratified by patent under the great seal. The king's answer was a direct mandate to chancery under the privy seal, instructing it to carry out the request of the chamber and to base the necessary writs of great seal on the orders received by them under the griffin seal.<sup>1</sup> The date, July 9, 1338, and the place, Walton, are significant. Three days later Edward issued the Walton ordinances, and a week later he sailed from Walton to the Netherlands.<sup>2</sup> This order to chancery was plainly a part of the general scheme for the government of the realm during his absence beyond sea. Henceforth the griffin seal was not an alternative, but rather the compulsory, warranty for all acts concerning the chamber lands.<sup>3</sup>

The result of this correspondence was the complete acceptance by chancery of the griffin seal, although the chancery clerks only slowly gave full recognition to the novel seal, by recording at the end of the enrolment of certain communications the fact of warranty by the griffin. Thus a writ, dated May 21, 1343, warranted by a writ under the griffin seal of the same date, is described in the close roll as warranted *per ipsum regem*.<sup>4</sup> So is another writ of 1345.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, so early as 1341 there is timid mention of a warranty "by the king and by writ under

<sup>1</sup> Both the chamber petition and the resultant writ of privy seal are printed in Maxwell-Lyte, p. 110. The king sent to chancery the petition along with the privy seal mandate by which he confirmed it.

<sup>2</sup> See above, iii. 68.

<sup>3</sup> This attempt to connect the two mandates to chancery, printed by Sir Henry Maxwell-Lyte, is suggested, with all reserves, as a hypothesis which assigns to each of them their place in the chronological development of the griffin seal and makes it more intelligible. In printing the act of October 12, after the act of July 9, Sir Henry has virtually suggested that it is later in date, and has therefore fallen into the same difficulty which led me to commit a similar error in my third volume.

<sup>4</sup> Maxwell-Lyte, p. 112, who prints the relevant griffin seal on p. 111, and says of it: "Except for the dated clause at the end, this might pass for a writ of privy seal." For the resultant writ close, see *C.C.R.*, 1343-46, p. 58. Those using Sir Henry's book would have been grateful if references to the calendars as well as to the rolls had been given by him, though, of course, his precise indications of roll and membrance enable them to be found in the calendars with a little additional trouble.

<sup>5</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1343-46, p. 517. Yet this writ tells the monks of Evesham, its recipients, that, on the money due for the custody of the abbey being sent to Burton, receiver of the chamber in London, they will receive "letters of acquittance under the seal called Griffoun."

the seal of *griffoun*,"<sup>1</sup> and by 1344 and 1345 records of warranty "by letter of the secret seal called *Griffoun*"<sup>2</sup> or "by letter under the seal called *le Griffoun*,"<sup>3</sup> become fairly common. For the next eight or nine years the thin stream of them rarely ceased entirely.

The exchequer was much more reluctant than the chancery to accept the griffin seal and all its implications. To the chancery an additional "small seal" in no wise trespassed upon the supreme authority of the great seal. But to the exchequer the griffin seal involved the withdrawal of the authority of the exchequer seal from those chamber lands in which the exchequer was already deprived of jurisdiction and revenue. Its position was the stronger since no serious difficulties had arisen before Edward's departure for the Netherlands. A few months later, the regency found it necessary to initiate a long series of instructions to the department before it was willing to acknowledge the validity of the new seal. The process began in 1339, when two writs of February 28, and March 6, in almost identical terms,<sup>4</sup> instructed the exchequer that when letters under the griffin seal were brought to it by any officer of the chamber lands, it was to make allowance for liveries and payments contained in the same, since the king wished such letters to be regarded as sufficient warranty.

No more was heard on the subject until after the king's return. But the irregularities complained of still went on, for on May 5, 1340, a chancery writ renewed the order of 1339 with greater detail and in more peremptory terms. Not only were the treasurer and barons ordered to make allowances for all payments made

<sup>1</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1341-43, p. 158. Sir Henry Maxwell-Lyte, p. 112, speaks of a "marked unwillingness" of the chancery clerks to call documents under the griffin seal "writs," and of their preference for calling them "letters." Yet so early as 1341, as the mention in the text shows, this reluctance could be overcome. I do not feel sure that the officials cared much about such distinctions as "writs" and "letters," except, perhaps, where the informal type of letter was concerned.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.*, 1343-46, p. 617.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* pp. 304-305.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.*, 1339-41, pp. 25 and 31. The later writ is printed in *Foedera*, ii. 1076. Both were, of course, "teste custode." The February writ was warranted by writ of privy seal, sent over from Flanders. Yet the calendar says it was "by council." The March writ has the same attestation and warranty. Both were therefore equally authoritative. The February writ was duly copied out by the exchequer in the Memoranda Roll (*M.R.K.R.* 116, breu. dir. bar., Mich. t., m. xxij), however little attention it paid to its injunctions.

by chamber officers under the griffin seal, they were also instructed not to make assignments of any things which the king had reserved to his chamber. Chamber officers, it appeared, duly instructed to pay their profits into the receipt of the chamber in the Tower of London, had been ordered to pay the same profits in another place by assignment of the treasurer and barons.<sup>1</sup> Financial stringency and the administrative crisis that soon followed doubtless gave the exchequer the opportunity of further evasion, for when things had settled down, there came, on March 13, 1341, a reissue of the order of March 6, 1339, in identical terms.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps, however, the repetition of the order was only confirmatory, it being considered that the personal mandate of the king would have greater influence than the order of the regent. Nevertheless, it seems to have had little effect, for the mandate was renewed on August 25 of the same year,<sup>3</sup> and again on January 3, 1342.<sup>4</sup> These seem to have been obeyed; anyhow there was no further repetition of them.

Thus, after over three years' struggle, the exchequer was reluctantly driven to recognise the validity of the chamber as an office of receipt and the force of its instrument the griffin seal. We have seen already<sup>5</sup> that it in no wise abated its hostility to the withdrawal of the chamber lands from its jurisdiction, and that, half-triumphant in 1349, it succeeded in 1356 in getting rid for ever of both the chamber lands and the griffin seal. But the story of a struggle which no longer centred round the validity of the griffin seal need not be repeated here.

The special interest of the griffin seal was the narrowness of its scope. We have had departmental seals already in the exchequer seal, and in the three fourteenth-century innovations, the secret seal of the chamber and the seals of the two judicial benches. But in the griffin seal we have for the first time a subdepartmental seal. Its sphere of action was confined to that

<sup>1</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1339-41, p. 405. This is also warranted by privy seal; *C.W.* 266/13040.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.*, 1341-43, p. 28, printed in *Foedera*, ii. 1152. The only difference is in the date and the substitution of "teste rege" for the "teste custode" of the document in *ib.* ii. 1076.

<sup>3</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1341-43, p. 215.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* p. 331. This writ, more precisely its privy seal warranty, was dated at Melrose. Of course its real date of issue was considerably later.

<sup>5</sup> Above, iv. 297-300.



branch of the chamber which dealt with the reserved lands, but even so, it is difficult to define its powers because, as we have seen already, there was in reality only one chamber. There was no such thing as a separate "chamber of lands." The estate, and the staff which administered it, existed for the benefit of the chamber and were indivisibly part and parcel of it. Thus the griffin seal illustrates both the growth of departmentalism and also the increasing sense of unity in the royal administration, the two contradictory tendencies of fourteenth-century administrative development. Despite its limited range, and despite the long struggle necessary to secure recognition for it, the griffin seal was, for nearly twenty years, an active organ of administration. The proof of this lies in the constant references to it in the chancery rolls, and still more, in the considerable number of surviving instruments authenticated by it. The most copious crop of originals is now to be found in two files of chancery warrants, numbered 1337 and 1338, exclusively devoted to warrants under the griffin seal. There are 176 of them, ranging in date from 17 to 28 Edward III., with one mandate which is conjecturally assignable to 14 Edward III. The warrants for 24 Edward III. are the most numerous, there being 47 of them, and only one other year, 25 Edward III., is represented by as many as 20. The great majority are, as one would expect, mandates to the chancellor to draw up letters, patent and close, on business having relation to the chamber lands and their administration. There are a few petitions and schedules, sent on to the chancery under the griffin seal, along with a letter requesting that the relevant instrument be drafted in the light of these particulars. There is also one mandate to Thoresby as keeper of the rolls of chancery.

Besides griffin writs and informal letters, there are some "bills of the griffin," phrased after the fashion of "bills of privy seal," and like them sealed on the face, with *billa de griffoun* written in a line by itself below, just above the edge of the parchment. At the other end of the scale are the letters patent under the griffin seal, to which the seal was attached *en simple queue*.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> There are instances in *E.A. Supplementary*, 662/1, but none of the seals is perfect and some are the merest fragments now. These letters patent are mainly quittances for receipts by the hands of Robert Mildenhall and William Rothwell. A fine example of a patent under griffin seal is in *C.W.* 1337/22.

Many of these doubtless had original force, but in important matters it was often found expedient for them to be "exemplified," confirmed or superseded by corresponding instruments under the great seal. The griffin letters were then practically pushed aside by the letters patent of chancery. All writs and "letters under the griffin seal" except patents, had the seal applied to the back, but unlike the contemporary letters and writs of privy seal and secret seal, usually towards the left lower edge, not on the extreme right centre. Only one or two documents are slit for the insertion of the tag before the application of the wax. The older method of securing, given up by the privy and secret seals by 1346, seems to have been preferred by the griffin.<sup>1</sup>

There survive a good many other instruments under griffin seal besides those in the chancery warrants. Most of them are in the exchequer accounts relating to the wardrobe and household, especially the "documents subsidiary to the accounts of the chamber." Of particular interest is the group contained in *E.A.* 391/8, "documents subsidiary to the accounts of the chamber 20-27 Edward III," chiefly writs under the great, secret and griffin seals. It shows the curious way in which chamber writs were divided between the secret and the griffin seals that this collection includes documents authenticated by both seals.<sup>2</sup> That a seal so impersonal as the griffin seal should be the alternative to the secret seal which was still regarded as voicing the individual wishes of the sovereign, is interesting. Some of these instruments under the griffin seal are warranted by the secret seal.<sup>3</sup> Another file of griffin seals includes writs and letters

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It has all the forms of a patent and is written in Latin, concluding with "In cuius rei testimonium has litteras nostras fieri fecimus patentes. Datas apud Westmonasterium sub sigillo nostro de griffon" etc.

<sup>1</sup> I have found one writ dated Nov. 4, 1354, slit and sealed on the extreme right dorse (*E.A.* 662/1); thirteen so slit and sealed for the years 1350, 1353, and 1354 (*C.W.* 1338/36, 75-82, 84, 86, 87, 88); and one dated Feb. 17, 1350, slit and sealed on the extreme left of the dorse (*ib.* 1338/4). Cf. also *E.A.* 391/8, for seven writs slit and sealed on the right dorse, and another slit but sealed in the old position.

<sup>2</sup> Of these *E.A.* 391/8, a letter of Nov. 30, 1346, "souz nostre secre seal," shows traces of a 25 mm. seal. Most of the impressions on these documents are mere scraps and outlines.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* the third document on the file is a writ of griffin seal warranted "per litteram de secreto sigillo."

patent subsidiary to the accounts of Hugh Tyrrell, keeper of Radnor Castle, when this Mortimer stronghold was in the king's hands between 1336 and 1343, and handed over to chamber administration.<sup>1</sup> Among these collections are some fine, though by no means perfect, impressions of griffin seals. There are others in *E.A.* 662.<sup>2</sup>

Of the custody of the griffin seal little is known, less even than about the custody of the secret seal. The starting-point of the examination of its custody is the fact that it was a seal for the administration of a scattered estate in England, and, therefore, could only be of much use if it were normally kept within the country. We might, therefore, expect it to be kept in the headquarters of the chamber in England, the Tower of London up to 1348, and, after that, in the new chamber in Westminster Palace appointed for hearing the chamber accounts.<sup>3</sup> Before 1348, we have record of persons paying in money to the receiver of the chamber in the Tower and obtaining from him quittance of their debts under griffin seal. A fair inference, therefore, is that these receivers, notably Kilsby,<sup>4</sup> Hatfield, Burton and Mildenhall, either had charge of the griffin seal at such times or that it was kept somewhere in the Tower accessible to them. But Kilsby left the chamber; Hatfield and Burton were taken away to serve in the chamber itinerant with the court beyond sea, and Mildenhall, never more than a deputy in this relation, became specialised to the service of the privy wardrobe and, therefore, remained in the Tower when the chamber was transferred to Westminster.

Under normal conditions the custody of archives went together with the keeping of the seal. Now the care of the chamber archives had, since 1335, devolved on Henry Greystock, the senior steward till 1349 and after 1349 the sole steward of the chamber.<sup>5</sup> When in 1348 the chamber headquarters were moved

<sup>1</sup> *E.A.* 20/8.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 187 n.

<sup>3</sup> See above, iv. 282.

<sup>4</sup> The following instances may be cited: (a) under Kilsby (1335), *C.C.R.*, 1333-37, p. 455; (b) under Hatfield (1343), *C.P.R.*, 1343-45, p. 23; (c) under Burton (1343-45), *C.C.R.*, 1343-46, p. 517; *C.P.R.*, 1345-48, pp. 95, 207, 253; (d) under Mildenhall (1347-51), *C.P.R.*, 1345-48, pp. 252-253; *C.C.R.*, 1349-54, pp. 181, 318. Mildenhall acted, not as keeper of the privy wardrobe, but as *locum tenens* for receiver Burton, abroad with the king. See above, iv. 259-260, 452-453.

<sup>5</sup> Above, iv. 269.



from the Tower to Westminster, Greystock was ordered to surrender these archives to the exchequer, in whose custody the few that have survived remained thereafter. It is, therefore, natural to suggest that Greystock, the steward, was a possible alternative to the receiver as the keeper of the griffin seal, especially since the commission to Greystock in 1347 included the obligation to enrol letters under the griffin seal.<sup>1</sup> But the difficulty is that there is no definite evidence in this matter, that I can find. All we know is that the griffin seal remained fairly active between 1348 and 1354, and must, therefore, have been in some definite custody. But we must remember that the secretarial department of the chamber was never adequately organised. We have seen that the chamber had to call in exchequer and chancery clerks to assist in its secretarial work,<sup>2</sup> and had no specialised secretariat until long after the griffin seal had disappeared along with the chamber lands. Yet the fact that in 1350 a letter of secret seal was warrant for a writ of griffin seal shows that the latter had a status of its own.

Whoever had charge of the griffin seal, there is little doubt that it tended to be kept in the Tower of London or at Westminster, where the majority of the instruments under it were issued. Writs issued from the Tower are rare after 1343, while those from Westminster begin then and become increasingly numerous. Yet it was not unusual for the griffin seal to be taken away from its headquarters, notably to various chamber manors not too far from London. Thus we find it used at Carisbrooke on July 16, 1343, at Brill on December 22 in the same year, on behalf of the king's tenants there.<sup>3</sup> It followed the king to Porchester and Yarmouth in June and July 1346. Whether it followed him on the Crécy campaign is doubtful, but it was operative in the camp outside Calais in November 1346, and remained there until Edward took the town. Afterwards it stayed in Calais itself, attesting numerous writs until October

<sup>1</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1345-48, p. 299. But a writ or informal letter to Greystock in 1352 under the griffin seal excites doubts as to whether he kept the seal which was used in correspondence with him; *E.A.* 391/8.

<sup>2</sup> Above, iv. 278-279.

<sup>3</sup> *C.W.* 1337/5. Did this result in the commission of Jan. 6, 1344, to Greystock and others to inquire as to the right of the steward of the adjacent forest to demand money from the men of Brill to exempt them from the "expeditio canum"? (*C.P.R.*, 1343-45, p. 184).

1347.<sup>1</sup> This is the only time that it is known to have gone abroad, and it is hardly an exception to the general rule, since so much of the administrative machinery was concentrated round the camp and court of the king at Calais, where there was what was called "the king's chamber on this side of the sea."<sup>2</sup> The griffin seal was back at Westminster before November 10, 1347, and for the future was normally established there. But in May 1349 it attested several writs at Woodstock, and in the autumn of that year was operating at Mortlake, Rotherhithe and Orsett. In April 1350 it issued writs at Windsor, in June at Henley in Surrey, in September one writ at Hertford in an unusual and unofficial hand. There were later excursions to Rotherhithe, Windsor and Carisbrooke, where the last writ was issued on July 20, 1354. The end of the series, dated November 20, 1354,<sup>3</sup> was issued from Westminster.

Once the scheme of substituting a fixed annual income for the chamber estate was launched, in the Michaelmas term of 1354, there was, apparently, no further need of the griffin seal. Set up for a specific purpose, it had small temptation or encouragement to encroach upon the jurisdiction of other seals. Nor was it sufficiently ambitious or powerful to enlarge, by venturing into unexplored territory, the claim staked out for it in the first place. When the original necessity for it had disappeared the griffin seal

<sup>1</sup> *C.W.* 1337/39-42, 44-48. The writs before or at Calais are dated Nov. 6, 1346, and Feb. 4, June 3, July 9 (three), Oct. 1 and 2, 1347. One of them, no. 42, is printed by Déprez, p. 87. It orders, on July 9, 1347, letters patent of safe conduct to a prisoner made by W. Kilsby. Nos. 44-46 are similar writs respecting three other prisoners of Kilsby. They were doubtless issued under the griffin seal, because Kilsby, who had been very active during the campaign, had died early in Sept. 1346, before the army reached Calais. See above, iii. 169, n. 7, where the words "and before Calais" must be deleted as an error. His estates were, somewhat tardily, taken into the king's hands (*C.P.R.*, 1345-48, pp. 242, 300), and administered by the chamber, owing to his debts to the chamber. Hence the employment of the griffin seal, both in warranting the two patents mentioned above and on the writ issued from Calais. Clearly Kilsby's captives were an important part of his possessions. M. Déprez's account of "les mandements sous le sceau de griffon" (*op. cit.* pp. 86-88) is impaired in value by his not realising that the griffin was a chamber seal, and by his suggestion that it operated all through Edward III.'s reign.

<sup>2</sup> Above, iv. 280.

<sup>3</sup> These statements are based on the places and dates of the griffin writs and letters in *C.W.* files 1337 and 1338. I cannot explain the significance of the movements indicated in the text, but they warn us not to stress overmuch the permanent keeping of the seal by the chamber office at Westminster.

had not made itself so indispensable as to be retained and diverted into other channels of activity. Although the period of final experiment was long, lasting fourteen months in all from December 1354 to January 1356, and the winding-up process, after the formal abolition of the estate in January 1356, slow, the use of the griffin seal was presumably discontinued before the close of 1354.

### SECTION III

#### THE SIGNUM

We have now to deal with a mysterious small seal of Edward III. It appears first in the detailed accounts of William Norwell, keeper of the wardrobe from July 11, 1338, to May 28, 1340.<sup>1</sup> They reveal the fact that, during Edward's long absence abroad between 1338 and 1340, he made constant use of a seal called *signum*. In the whole of these accounts, I have found no references to the secret seal, though there are plenty to *littere secrete* emanating from the court, without more specific indication of how the letters were sealed. The accounts mention letters issued under the great seal, under the privy seal and *sub signo* only.<sup>2</sup> Letters under the great seal, however, are at first mentioned rarely,<sup>3</sup> and practically all the letters entrusted to *nuncii*, whose wages are entered in the accounts, were *sub priuato sigillo* or *sub signo*.

Edward III.'s correspondence *sub signo* was of widely varied character. He wrote *sub signo* to his wife, to his eldest son, the duke of Cornwall, to his chancellor, to his treasurer, and often to Kilsby, his keeper of the privy seal, who was abroad with him for nearly the whole of this period. He corresponded under the same

<sup>1</sup> *M.B.E.* 203.

<sup>2</sup> There is no doubt about this. *Sub signo* is written in full without any sign of abbreviation whatever. *Sub priuato sigillo* is generally unabbreviated.

<sup>3</sup> There are some on ff. 11d, and 117d. On 117d record is made of payments to Henry Corfe and other *nuncii* on Jan. 25 for expenses incurred in taking letters of great seal to various magnates and sheriffs in England, "unacum impressionibus sigillorum priuati et magni." These are clearly the impressions of the new seals adopted by Edward after assuming the title of king of France. After this, references to letters of great seal become commoner.



seal with the communities of Bruges and Ghent, and with the two cardinals, who were constantly at hand with offers of mediation.<sup>1</sup> Letters *sub signo* were only less numerous than those *sub priuato sigillo*. The *signum* was also constantly used in the days of keeper Cusance, May 1340 to November 1341,<sup>2</sup> when, however, letters are recorded as issued under the secret seal as well as under the *signum*, implying that the two phrases indicated different seals.

The next detailed wardrobe accounts, drawn up by Richard Eccleshall, *locum tenens* of Robert Kilsby and Walter Wetwang, successively controllers, testify to the use of the *signum* in the period from November 25, 1341, to April 10, 1344.<sup>3</sup> Here also we find record of *littere regis sub signo* sent to the two queens, Philippa and Isabella, to the chancellor and treasurer, the earl marshal, the earl of Northampton, the keeper of the wardrobe and many others.<sup>4</sup> In this account, however, there is abundant evidence of the use of the secret seal as well as the *signum*. Edward now corresponded with the communes of Ghent, Bruges and Ypres,<sup>5</sup> with the archbishop of Canterbury and others,<sup>6</sup> under the secret and privy seals. During this period, the secret seal and the *signum* may be regarded as equally employed.

A few years later, the balance changed. From the accounts of John Buckingham for 1353<sup>7</sup> it is clear that the *signum* was still used, but references to it are rare. On the other hand, letters of secret seal are referred to frequently, and many *nuncii* were recorded as sent out with them, or *in negociis regis secretis*,<sup>8</sup> which probably means the same thing. Yet only one messenger was dispatched with letters *sub signo*, addressed to the archbishop of Canterbury, the bishop of Winchester and John

<sup>1</sup> *M.B.E.* 203, ff. 109d 115, 118d.

<sup>2</sup> *E.A.* 389/8, royal letters to Cusance when "extra curiam", often sealed "sub signo".

<sup>3</sup> *M.B.E.* 204.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* 204, ff. 94, 94d, 98d, 101d, etc. Isabella also had her "signum" with which she sealed a charter to Coventry; cf. below, p. 194, n. 2. She had as well a "signetum," which looks as if it were not the same; *E.A.* 393/4.

<sup>5</sup> *M.B.E.* 204/94, "Francekino de Gaunt deferenti litteras regis sub priuato et secreto sigillis communitatibus villarum de Gaunt, Bruges et Ipsres."

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.* f. 99, 100d and 101.

<sup>7</sup> *E.A.* 392/2, "compotus Johannis de Bukyngham, custodis garderobe domini regis, de eadem garderoba, anno xxvii°," etc.

<sup>8</sup> *Ib.* 392/2, ff. 45d, 46, 46d.

Beauchamp.<sup>1</sup> In the accounts for subsequent years I have noted no references to the *signum* at all.<sup>2</sup>

The question is, what was this *signum*? What was its relation to the secret seal? I am inclined, on the whole, to think that the *signum* of these accounts represents the third secret seal of Edward III., which, as we have seen, was adopted at Ghent in 1339.<sup>3</sup> The coincident use of the new seal and the new phrase at the time of Edward's long visit to the Netherlands makes this view the most probable. If there were no other evidence than that afforded by Norwell's accounts, the identification would seem certain. The difficulty is that in later accounts *signum* and secret seal are mentioned side by side. There is, however, no great improbability of the two terms being used synonymously for the same thing. Secret seal was an expression so customary that it is hardly likely to have been driven out by a new phrase. It is perhaps significant that so long as this 15 mm. seal was employed, that is, up to about 1352 or 1353, so long does *signum* occur in English records.<sup>4</sup> After 1354 we find the term alternating with secret seal no longer *signum* but *signetum*. Yet so late as 1363, Urban V. spoke of Edward's *signum secretum*, in a passage which confirms our impression that *signum* was but a synonym for secret seal. If the *signum* and the *secretum* of this period were different seals, we may perhaps say that, while the *signum* was a 15-mm. seal, the *secretum* was represented by those mysterious seals of larger size to which I have already referred. In that case the *signum* was, so to say, the *signetum* in the making.

<sup>1</sup> *E.A.* 392/2, f. 46d. It should, however, be remembered that the "titulus de nunciis" in this roll is very short, extending over barely more than two folios. The whole sum paid to "nuncii" was only £9 : 19 : 6, and not one "nuncius" sent with letters under the privy seal is mentioned. Subsequent wardrobe accounts are also very meagre under this title. The inference is that the messengers bearing letters under the great and privy seals received henceforth their wages and expenses elsewhere than from the wardrobe, or if from the wardrobe, that the details were hidden away under such heads as "garderoba," or "vadia," in the "rotuli hospicii," which record day by day the total sums paid under these categories, but give no particulars of the persons who received them.

<sup>2</sup> Queen Isabella's "signum" is referred to after her death in 1358; *E.A.* 393/4.

<sup>3</sup> Above, pp. 174-175.

<sup>4</sup> *C.W.* 1334/3.

## SECTION IV

## THE SIGNET UNDER RICHARD II

In the first section of this chapter we traced the beginning, and gradual spread, of the use of the term "signet" in the reign of Edward III., and found reason to believe that the term was in its origin nothing more than a synonym for that "secret seal" which we have sought to distinguish from the privy seal. Practical and theoretical reasons combined to make it desirable to describe the new personal seal of the monarch by some less ambiguous term than the well-worn one of *secretum*. The privy seal, the original *secretum*, had now become a "seal of government." Its custodian was one of the king's chief ministers of state, and its use was hedged about with solemn forms that made it unable to discharge any longer its early function of expressing the king's will. Yet, as we know, it retained the word *secretum* on its matrix. In view of these facts, "secret seal" was a bad name for the more personal seal of the monarch. But there were other reasons which made a different name for it desirable. With all their insularity, English kings and statesmen were compelled to take account of the names and forms that prevailed among neighbouring states with which they had most frequent diplomatic intercourse. The use of the term "secret seal" in the chief chanceries of Europe, notably in the court of the Valois kings,<sup>1</sup> and in the papal *curia*, was very definitely tied down by the fourteenth century to indicate an official seal, the equivalent of our privy seal.

In France the "secret seal" was, as we have seen, an integral part of the official system. Similarly, at Avignon the papal *secretum* of the "fisherman's ring" was normally affixed to definite classes of diplomatic instruments. The intimate relations of friendship and hostility between England, Avignon and France made it practically inconvenient to use "secret seal" in England in a sense diametrically opposed to that current on the continent. As a matter of fact, the fourteenth-century English official, ecclesiastically trained and curialistically minded,

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 143-149.



could hardly shake himself free from the current continental significance of the term "secret seal." But the usage of the French court also offered a term better fitted to express the idea involved in this English late and restricted application of the term "secret seal." The secret seal in England was called signet, because that was the name by which the analogous seal in France was known. Behind the French custom lay the fact that from time immemorial, in all parts of the civilised world, the signet finger ring, bearing some recognised device of its wearer, had been habitually impressed on wax to authenticate documents conveying personal wishes and commands. In the course of a few years "signet" had ousted "secret seal" altogether from common speech in England, though down to the end of Richard II.'s reign, "secret seal" was still occasionally used in official documents as an alternative for signet,<sup>1</sup> and even sometimes in old-fashioned non-official circles as the equivalent for the privy seal.

At first sight my position may seem directly antagonistic to that of M. Morel, who strongly maintained that the "royal signet" of France was something absolutely distinct from the *sceau du secret*, and declared erroneous the view, hitherto taken by all writers, that *signetum* and *sigillum secreti* were synonymous.<sup>2</sup> For the early Valois period in France it must be admitted that M. Morel has proved his contention up to the hilt. In a masterly examination of the instances of the French secret seal given in Douët d'Arcq's great collection for the reigns of Philip the Fair and the first three Valois kings, M. Morel makes it clear that in France, as in England, there was for this period an official seal of government, the *sceau du secret*, and besides, a personal seal of the sovereign, which he calls the *signet royal*.

Already in the later days of Philip the Fair, there was a personal royal seal in France distinct from the official "great" and "secret" seals. Bardin's famous and much-disputed text<sup>3</sup> speaks not only of the great seal *quo cancellarius sigillare consueverat* and of the above-mentioned secret seal *cuius custodiam*

<sup>1</sup> For examples *Ad. MS.* 35,115/45, and *E.A.* 403/22, f. 17. In both these late Ricardian wardrobe accounts the "nuncii" are paid for taking letters of secret seal, and there is no reference to the signet. It is certain, however, that the signet is meant.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 260.

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 144, n. 1.

*habebat cambellanus*, but also of the *parvum sigillum quod rex ferre solebat*. The separate existence of the three seals is absolutely clear, since, according to Bardin, all of them were employed to authenticate the act suppressing the parliament of Toulouse in 1312. Are we justified in calling this third seal a signet? M. Morel believes we are, though he is not very convincing when he argues that the small seals of St. Louis and Philip IV. were called signet and reads the S. L. of the former and the S. I. G. of the latter as probably standing for *signetum* and not for *sigillum*. He is the less convincing since he gives no instances of the use of the term signet in France before 1349,<sup>1</sup> and at the same time admits that the personal seal of John of Valois in 1362 bore the legend *sigillum secretum*, and that of Charles V. in 1371 the legend *seel secret*. True, M. Morel makes an attempt to demonstrate that in the fourteenth century *secretum sigillum* and *seel secret* are to be distinguished from *sigillum secreti* and *sceau du secret*, and that the former meant personal "signet" and the latter the official "secret seal." But how about the use of terms like *signetum secretum*, *signet secret*, which a mere reference to Ducange will show to have been usual in the fourteenth century in France as well as in England? Is *signetum* any more originally than a synonym for *sigillum*? M. Morel seems to go rather too far in applying the categories of the

<sup>1</sup> I have not been able to find "signetum" in any text earlier than the fourteenth century. It is not, so far as I know, used in England before the reign of Edward III., nor in France before that of John. Edward III. had a signet by 1337, and for his mother's signet or "signum," see above, p. 193, n. 4, and *E.A.* 391/4, "et aliud breue de sigillo vocato le signet." The examples of the use of the term given in Ducange, *Glossarium mediae et infimae Latinitatis* are all posterior to the middle of the fourteenth century, and the earlier ones show it to be at that period a mere synonym for "secretum." For examples, 1359 "donne a Nantes souz nostre *signet de secret*," Lobineau, *Hist. Bret.* ii. col. 409; cf. *ib.* col. 638: "Le signet secret de noz chevances." These are exactly parallel to the English passages quoted in the preceding chapter. The instance of signet, as sharply differentiated from seal, given by Ducange, is a Scottish example of Robert III., "Statutum est quod quilibet baro . . . habeat sigillum proprium . . . et quod sigilla sint et non signeta sicut ante ista tempora fieri consuevit," *Stat. Rob. III.* cap. 1, 5. Soon after the middle of the fourteenth century, the chancellor of the University of Paris was in the habit of sending the successful candidates for the licence on the higher faculty an invitation to receive the licence. This invitation was called his "signetum," because it was sealed, "signeto quodam cancellarie . . . que cedula communi nomine in studio et civitate Paris. *signeta* vocantur"; Denifle-Chatellain, *Cart. Univ. Par.* ii. 683-684.

fourteenth century to the facts of the thirteenth, and it is perhaps safer to recognise that "secret seal," "small seal," "signet" and the rest were all in the first place absolute synonyms, only becoming differentiated later. The question is largely one of names rather than facts, and M. Morel has done admirable service in pointing out that all these small seals originate in personal stamps, rings, *annuli signatorii*, signets, or what you will, of the sovereign, and that their history is a process of successive reduplication. M. Morel stresses this process as being one of so many *dédouplements successifs du signet*. It would perhaps be more historical to describe the evolution of the small seals of England and France as so many duplications of the secret or privy seal, if only for the reason that signet, both in France and in England, seems a definitely fourteenth-century term. M. Morel might have gone even further back and made the great seal itself an early example of a "duplication of the signet," for it is admitted that the origin of all seals is in rings of the signet type. However, whatever we call the early private stamps of St. Louis or Philip IV., they are clearly of what is called later the signet type.

Philip IV.'s small seal was a round stamp of 15 mm. exactly the same size as the signets of Edward III.'s middle period, 1339-52. Its image of the rampant lion distinguishes it from the "shield of arms" used as the "secret seal" for letters close; and M. Morel is clearly right in identifying it with the *parvum sigillum* of Bardin. Moreover, the separation between the seals was the result of unconscious evolution and not of definite policy. Even M. Morel's capital distinction of an official and a private seal was only gradually brought about, and it is unlikely that the men of the fourteenth century were more than half conscious of it. Let us distinguish between the distinctions we make for ourselves and those made by contemporaries, not so logical as to mind calling two things by the same name. Thus the name "secret seal" long clung in both countries to what it is more convenient for us to call the signet, and under Edward III. and his French contemporaries "secret seal" and "signet" were only struggling slowly towards differentiation. This explains the legends of the seals of John II. (1362) and of Charles V. (1371).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 197. M. Morel rather quaintly says of these two, "C'est un signet royal qui, bien que portant la légende *sigillum secretum*, n'est pas



Whatever may have been the custom in the courts of St. Louis and Philip IV., the personal seal was certainly, as M. Morel proves, called the signet under Philip of Valois. In 1349 a secret seal of that king forbade the treasury to pay officers except for periods of effective service, *si nostre petit signet que portons n'y estoit plaqué et apparent*.<sup>1</sup>

For the reigns of John II. and Charles V., M. Morel makes it clear that signet was a term in frequent use. An instrument of the former period, issued in 1345, was sealed *cum paruo signeto nostro quod deferimus*, a phrase taking us back to Bardin, and an instrument of Charles V., issued in 1370, was authenticated by *nostre signet et nostre seel du secret*.<sup>2</sup> In the latter years of Charles V.'s reign, no "letter of gift or payment" was valid unless authenticated by a special signet established in 1379.<sup>3</sup> The ordinary signet was described as *celuy de quoy le roy seele les lettres qu'il escript de sa main*. Later, it generally appeared on the same document as a more official seal, a use rightly regarded by M. Morel as being not so much an authentication by sealing as an equivalent for the royal signature. Thus, the signet in France never quite lost its original character of a personal seal of the crown, and the numerous and various signets employed tended to keep up its primitive and unofficial status. The reduplication of the lesser seals was worked out similarly in England and France. In the thirteenth century there was one personal seal of the sovereign, indifferently called secret seal, privy seal, small seal, but not, so far as I know, signet. This personal seal became official, so that the king had to employ a new private seal of his own, as did Philip IV. by 1312 and Edward II. after the promulgation of the 1311 ordinances. There does not seem to have been the constitutional significance in the French duplications that we suspect lay in the English, but from the point of view of

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le moins au monde un sceau du secret. C'est le signet royal, malgré la legende *seel secret*." No doubt it is convenient for us to call them signets, but the legends remind us that the fourteenth century was not so clear-headed as M. Morel. All these "small seals" are identical in origin, and the difference in fourteenth-century usage does not, despite M. Morel, prove difference in origin.

<sup>1</sup> Morel, *op. cit.* p. 267, from *Ordon.* ii. 302.

<sup>2</sup> This signet is reminiscent in some ways of the griffin seal of Edward III. "Nous avons un signet pour mettre es lettres sanz le quel nul denier de nostre dit domaine ne sera paye"; *Ordon.* vi. 381.

<sup>3</sup> Morel, pp. 260-261.

administrative machinery the results were the same in both countries. Let us now examine the English signet more closely. By the accession of Richard II. the usage of the signet had already crystallised into certain elementary set forms, and with his reign there begins an unbroken series of signet letters preserved among the chancery warrants.<sup>1</sup> There is only one signet among the surviving warrants for exchequer issues, and it is dated April 14 (1385).<sup>2</sup> But towards the middle of the reign, signet warrants began to be addressed to the keepers of the privy seal, though all those surviving for these last few years of the fourteenth century are contained in a single file.<sup>3</sup> At first there was, for a few weeks, an abnormal use of the signet. It was easier to provide a signet in a hurry than a privy seal. For the privy seal a special matrix had to be cut, but any engraved gem or ring was suitable for a signet. Such a signet was used by the little king on the very day of his accession, on a warrant to chancery, dated Kennington, June 22, 1377, and *donne souz le signet de nostre anel en absence de nostre priue seal*.<sup>4</sup> Other early signet warrants of the reign tell the same tale, the Latin formula being *data sub signeto anuli nostri in absencia priuati sigilli nostri*.<sup>5</sup> No instrument issued *sub signeto nostro* without apology for the lack of a privy seal survives for a date earlier than July 10, 1377.<sup>6</sup> It was plainly a matter of indifference whether privy seal or signet were used, so long as the king was a child with no will of his own. But the traditionalism of the public service was too strong to be influenced by such considerations. As soon as a privy seal could be made, it was put into use.

The method of affixing the signet was unchanged. A cross of red wax, with four, usually equal, arms, was made on all instruments to which the seal was to be applied *en placard* or *plaqué au dos*, the signet then being impressed on a blob of wax at the intersection of the arms. The average size of the cross was about 67 mm. by 67 mm. but sometimes it was as small as 60 mm. by 60 mm., or even 50 mm. by 50 mm., and as large as 100 mm. by 100 mm. Oftener than not, perhaps always, a fender of twisted

<sup>1</sup> C.W. 1339.

<sup>2</sup> *Exch. of Rec., Warr. for Issues*, bundle 14.

<sup>3</sup> *Warrants for the Privy Seal, P.S.O.* 1/1, all of them informal letters. There are neither writs nor bills among them. These warrants only begin when John Waltham was keeper of the privy seal, namely, in 1386.

<sup>4</sup> C.W. 1339/1.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* 1339/2.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.* 1339/8.

rush was imbedded in the wax, both when the seal was applied *en double queue* as well as when it was *en placard* and *plaqué au dos*.<sup>1</sup> These precautions against detachment were probably adopted lest, without something of the kind, so small a seal should flake off altogether. The early introduction and quickly won popularity of paper for signet instruments may have been responsible for the use of such devices. Yet the danger of loss or damage seems equally possible from parchment as from paper, for if the one was too flexible and brittle, the other might well be too stiff. It must also be confessed that, although no cross or fender was used for the small 10-mm. second secret seal of Edward III.,<sup>2</sup> the cross was used for the small secret seal or signet which came into being in the second half of the reign, and ultimately superseded the larger one-inch "new signet" or secret seal of 1354-67.<sup>3</sup> Besides, some of the crosses were so thin as to have furnished little or no protection. All these suggestions, indeed, may very well be vain, and the true explanation still to seek. Though the impressions of Richard II.'s signet are mostly destroyed, its one-time presence on all instruments sealed on the back or face is witnessed by still adhering fragments, or by a stained shape, of the waxen cross. The same method of sealing, used in France from a somewhat earlier date, prevailed all through the reign of Richard II. It supplies a quaint instance of the minute similarities in method of the administrations of the rival realms on opposite sides of the Channel.<sup>4</sup>

The sequence of Richard's signets, if sequence there were, cannot be determined in the light of our present knowledge. Later, if further and more exact evidence is discovered, it may be possible to assign them to their chronological order and limits. But very likely, indeed almost certainly, if the truth were known, we should find that Richard used several signets contemporaneously. Fortunately, although we cannot say this is the first

<sup>1</sup> I do not remember having noticed the signet applied "en simple queue," or attached by "lacs de soie."

<sup>2</sup> Above, pp. 171-174.

<sup>3</sup> Above, p. 177.

<sup>4</sup> The imprint of the French signet is figured in Morel, *op. cit.* p. 295, fig. 10. The document, dated February 1375, was really given "soubz le seel royal ordene en labsence du grant," which was apposed "en simple queue," and the signet, as so often, served merely as an additional authentication. Butler's warrants in *C.W.* 1644 show that the seal of the king's butlers of Richard II.'s time had a similar cross of wax, but with much shorter arms to it.



and this the second, here this began and that ceased to be used, we have indication, in the better-preserved specimens, of the design and inscription of some of Richard II.'s signets. The documents to which these specimens are attached, although some of them are so sadly mutilated as to be almost completely indecipherable, also serve as guide to the period of activity. Records of payments made by the exchequer for the engraving of royal signets contribute a little more about their design, the material of which the matrices were made, and the dates at which they were in use. In May 1378, the issue rolls record the payment to a goldsmith for a signet of gold with the letter R, weighing in gold forty shillings and eightpence, and for the making of the same six shillings and eightpence.<sup>1</sup> I am not sure that an impression of this signet is in existence, but the exchequer description may not impossibly apply to one of two almost identical matrices, two impressions of each of which have recently been found in the Public Record Office,<sup>2</sup> among some common pleas documents. Both matrices bore an open crown on a round centre panel, encircled by the legend R(EX) ANGLIE ET FRANCIE, but one was smaller than the other. The smaller of the two had a total diameter of 13 mm., a crown of 6 mm. wide, and its legend enclosed in twisted-rope-like rims. The larger of the two had a total diameter of 15 mm., a more ornate crown 8 mm. wide, and its legend enclosed in plain rims. Three of the four impressions are surrounded by a thin, loosely twisted rush fender, and all were imposed at the intersection of the arms of a cross. The two smaller, and one of the larger, impressions, are on letters addressed to Robert Bealknap, chief justice of common bench, and the other larger impression is on a letter addressed to Walter Clopton, chief justice of king's bench. Now Bealknap was dismissed, and Clopton was appointed in January 1388.<sup>3</sup> It looks,

<sup>1</sup> *I.R.* 468/2, "pro uno signeto auri cum littera R, ponderante in auro xls. viiid., et pro factura eiusdem, vis. viiid." Cf. *Rot. Parl.* iv. 312, where a goldsmith's widow demands, for debts incurred by Henry IV., "item pur la faisure d'un signet d'or pur le secretaire, xiiis. iiiid." The cheapness of the signet is again worth noting, for at the same time the making of the privy seal cost £10, and the great seal "in two pieces," £50; see above, p. 133.

<sup>2</sup> Since the publication of Sir Henry Maxwell-Lyte's book, in which I have read the account of Richard II.'s signets (u.s. pp. 112-117) with great profit. My attention has been drawn to these new signets by Mr. Jenkinson and Mr. Galbraith. See below, App. pl. IV. nos. 3, 4. <sup>3</sup> Above, iii. 422-423, 429.

therefore, as if the smaller matrix were the earlier of the two, and as if it had later been replaced by the larger one sometime before January 1388, though there is the possibility of the two having been used concurrently. The letters themselves are either so mutilated, faded or inadequately dated as to defy immediate identification. Careful and minute investigation may succeed in establishing approximate if not actual dates for them, when the periods of the currency of the seals might be narrowed down to within more exact limits, but at present it is not practicable to be more precise. A further complication is contributed by the fact that Douët d'Arcq describes a signet authenticating a letter of 1399 as round, 15 mm. in diameter, bearing a crown and the fragmentary legend . . . NCIE-ANGLIE.<sup>1</sup> This sounds much like an impression of the second of the two matrices we are considering. The difficulty is that the legend seems transposed. But if the matrix used in 1399 was not the 15-mm. matrix of the early part of the reign, it was obviously so similar that we shall probably not be far wrong in regarding it as a direct successor of the earlier one. In effect, then, there appears to have been in use all through Richard II.'s reign a signet of the type represented by these four early and one late impressions, and it does not seem too great a stretch of imagination to believe that the signet paid for by the exchequer in 1378, and described in that office as bearing the letter R, was the earliest of the matrices on which the first word of the legend, Rex, was abbreviated to R. How many matrices for this signet were made in the course of the reign is matter for speculation, but our present scanty evidence seems to account for three.

Another signet used by Richard belongs to a rather different type. The earliest impression of it occurs on a document dated October 15, 1384, and is figured, though not very clearly, in Mr. Hunter Blair's *Durham Seals*.<sup>2</sup> The seal measures about 15 mm., say  $\frac{3}{5}$ th of an inch, in diameter. Across the middle the name RICHARD is inscribed, and both above and below there is a triangle, with a tiny Gothic flourish inside and on the left and right outside.

<sup>1</sup> Douët d'Arcq, iii. 268, no. 10,035; see also above, p. 174, n. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Durham Seals*, plate E, No. 13. Cf. Maxwell-Lyte, p. 113. The seal is exhibited in the P.R.O. Museum, case H. 80. It comes from *C.W.* 1343/18 and is a warrant in favour of Sir Baldwin Raddington. See below, App. pl. IV. no. 5.

By 1395 another signet, of an altogether different type, was in use. The matrix was a little larger than any of those we have already noticed, say 19 mm., or  $\frac{3}{4}$ ", in diameter, and was the first signet matrix to imitate the privy seal in representing a "shield of arms." On it were engraved the mythical "arms of Edward the Confessor," which Richard had now made his own, impaled with the lilies of France and the leopards of England quarterly, and a legend which reads S.R. (Sigillum regis) ANGLIE ET FRANCIE.<sup>1</sup> This signet Richard called "our own personal signet of St. Edward," and he continued to use it until the end of his reign. Very likely it was the gold signet ring which, on September 29, 1399, after his abdication in parliament, he took from his finger and placed on the finger of his supplanter, Henry of Lancaster.<sup>2</sup> It was possibly the signet which accompanied the king and John Lincoln to Ireland earlier in the year. But so late as 1397, we have evidence of the use of one more signet, said to have been inscribed LE ROY RICHARD.<sup>3</sup> If this description, given by the king himself, is accurate, the matrix must have been a different one from that inscribed RICHARD only.<sup>4</sup> Queen Anne also had her signet and secretary, her signet being occasionally used by the king when his own was not available.<sup>5</sup> The signet matrix and chain were made of gold, though the matrix and chain of the privy seal were still made of silver.<sup>6</sup> One of the first acts of

<sup>1</sup> *Dip. Docs.* Exch. 317, 326; *Scottish Docs.* 92/5, 95/12. I am indebted for these references to Sir Henry Maxwell-Lyte. See App. pl. IV. no. 6.

<sup>2</sup> See below, p. 210.

<sup>3</sup> *C.W.* 1354/24; Maxwell-Lyte, p. 117.

<sup>4</sup> See above, p. 203. The B.M. possesses a modern red wax impression, taken from a bronze matrix in the City of London Museum, which is described in *Detached Seals and Impressions*, 1911-15, clvii. 3, as an "impression of the signet of Richard II." It is 40 mm., or  $1\frac{5}{8}$ ", in diameter. There is a narrow centre panel, the length of the matrix, showing a crowned standing figure holding a fleur-de-lys sceptre in the right hand, and in the left hand, across the front of its person, a shield (12 mm.  $\times$  13 mm.) bearing the three leopards of England. Over the left shoulder of the figure, and between its feet, is a fleur-de-lys. On each side of the panel is intricate Gothic moulding and tracery, beyond which is the legend RICARDUS DEI GRATIA REX ANGLIE, interspersed with what appear to be roses and wheatears. The whole is enclosed in a finely beaded rim. The material of the matrix, bronze, and its size, so much greater than the signets we have just described, seem to preclude the possibility of its being a signet, and further, the arms on the shield and the legend suggest doubts as to its being a matrix for any seal of Richard II. For what seal then was it made, and for which king, Richard II. or Richard III.?

<sup>5</sup> *C.W.* 1354/5, 6, 7, 15; Maxwell-Lyte, p. 115; above, iii. 459, n. 2.

<sup>6</sup> See above, p. 133, and n. 5.



Henry IV. was to pay for the making of a gold signet for the secretary.<sup>1</sup>

The diplomatic of the signet need not detain us long.<sup>2</sup> The rules of the office of the secret seal, in which the signet originated, were faithfully followed. Elaborate writs, based upon writs of privy seal, had become nearly obsolete before Richard's day.<sup>3</sup> The instruments issued under the signet were mainly *littere de signeto* and *bille de signeto*, analogous to the informal letters and bills under privy seal,<sup>4</sup> except that the signet letters almost always omitted the year. From 1386 some of them were signed in the lower right-hand corner of the face, by a clerk of the signet, just like some of the warrants under privy seal which were signed by one of the four privy seal clerks between 1360 and 1362.<sup>5</sup> The problem is, why was this done? The simplest theory is that the person signing acknowledged responsibility for the communication, or admitted to having checked it before issue. But if this is the real explanation, why, we are tempted to ask, did not the privy seal adopt such a useful precaution in the fourteenth century, instead of merely experimenting with it? Why, also, were not all signet letters signed? There does not, at present, seem to be any satisfactory solution.

Though documents under the signet were not seldom sent directly into chancery, thereby replacing privy seal warrants, many letters of the signet were warrants to the keeper of the privy seal to issue privy seal warrants to chancery. Besides the signet letters sent individually to the three chief ministers, a number of signet letters sent into chancery were addressed collectively to all three, as to a sort of permanent committee of council.<sup>6</sup>

It is worth while tracing the ebb and flow of signet instruments

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 202, n. 1, an extract from *Rot. Parl.* iv. 312.

<sup>2</sup> The materials most accessible for its study are now in *C.W.* 1339-55; *P.S.O.* 1/1. But scattered evidence is to be found in other classes of documents in the *P.R.O.*

<sup>3</sup> One example of a signet writ is addressed to the chancellor and orders the nomination of the keeper of the privy seal, John Fordham, to a prebend in Wells cathedral; *C.W.* 1339/15. The language is Latin and Fordham is curiously described as "*custos secreti sigilli*," a phrase that probably carelessly echoes the formula of a papal bull which authorised certain royal nominations to prebends. The date is Feb. 13, 1379, "*sub signeto anuli nostri*."

<sup>4</sup> See above, pp. 113-115.

<sup>5</sup> See above, p. 114.

<sup>6</sup> *C.W.* 1339/50.

under Richard II., especially among the Chancery Warrants, where the largest mass of them is found. There we can distinguish three periods. For the first six years of Richard's reign, one file suffices to contain the surviving signets. During that time the signet was used much as it had been under Edward III. Then came a period of great activity. There are two files for 7 Richard II., four for 8 Richard II., six for 9 Richard II., and two files for 10 Richard II., or, more precisely, from June to October 1386, when there is a sudden and abrupt stop.<sup>1</sup> After a spell of apparent inactivity, the signet was used again as warranty for the great seal. But, if we may judge from the extant warrants, not nearly so frequently as in the previous period, for from August 1387 to the king's deposition at Michaelmas 1399, one file suffices to contain them all.<sup>2</sup> Substantially, then, the vogue of the signet warrants for the great seal was from June 1383 to October 1386. This period produced fifteen files, of which ten are for the years June 1384 to June 1386. As the signet warrants decrease in number, the privy seals increase, so that, while three to five files suffice to contain the privy seal warrants for each of the years 5 to 12 Richard II., twelve files are devoted to those of 13 Richard II., 1389-1390.

We must not, however, forget that there were many other signet instruments issued besides those addressed to the chancellor, the treasurer and the keeper of the privy seal. The signet letter, which had direct force, and was not simply a warrant for the issue of another instrument, is not represented at all in the chancery and privy seal collections. For instance, all letters written by Richard II. to his council were given under the signet, a habit continued by his successors,<sup>3</sup> and how many were directed to other courts, corporations and individuals can only, at this stage, be imagined. But this is no reason why the varying numbers of surviving signet instruments found on the chancery files for the different years of Richard's reign should not be

<sup>1</sup> It is hard, therefore, to believe the statement of *Cont. Eul. Hist.* iii. 360, that Richard ordered chancellor Arundel to seal the commission of 1386 by the signet. "Huic commissioni oportuit regem consentire, praecepitque Thomae cancellario predictam commissionem sigillare, quod et factum est ad mandatum suum sub signeto."

<sup>2</sup> *C.W.* 1354. File 1355 consists of miscellaneous dated instruments.

<sup>3</sup> Nicolas, *O.P.C.* i. 57.

regarded as correctly illustrating the rise and fall in the use of this seal.

We have pointed out before that the ebb and flow of the use of the signet by Richard II. possess an obvious constitutional significance. The sparing use of the signet in the years 1377-1383 shows that, during the minority, it was simply one of the ordinary cogs in the wheel of the administrative machine. The enormous extension of its use from 1383 to 1386 suggests that it became the favourite seal of the young king while he was learning how to be a personal ruler. The privy seal had become hopelessly officialised: its custody was often in hands likely to be guided by the opposition leaders; it no longer, in any real sense, expressed the monarch's individual will. Richard accordingly employed the signet where earlier kings would have used the privy seal. Whether by design or accident, the result of his policy was inevitably the supersession of the privy seal by the signet. A glance at the calendars of the patent rolls of the reign confirms the impression conveyed by the surviving warrants under the signet. We are struck at once by the frequency with which the patent under the great seal was issued on the authority of the signet without the intermediate link of a warrant of privy seal. This is especially noticeable in the years immediately preceding the first effective opposition to Richard in the parliament of October 1386. The organisation of the baronial opposition in that memorable assembly was soon followed by the decline of the use of the signet. With the triumph of the lords appellant, the signet fell back into its former subordinate position.

Chancellor Arundel's refusal to recognise the signet as a warrant for the great seal, and the overriding of the signet by the great seal for several years after, are matters on which all has been said that need be said.<sup>1</sup> Even when the king employed the signet only as the first stage in setting the great seal in motion, the keeper of the privy seal had then no scruple in drafting his privy seal instrument on different lines from those suggested as the royal pleasure under the signet.<sup>2</sup> In all such cases "the

<sup>1</sup> See above, iii. 417, n. 1, and iv. 41-42.

<sup>2</sup> See H. Hall, *Formula Book of Diplomatic Documents*, pp. 105-106, where is printed a signet letter of Jan. 26, 1391, instructing keeper Stafford "par avys



advice of the king's council " was regarded as sufficient warrant for countermanding the king's pleasure.

Perhaps it was Richard's prudent self-restraint that led him, in the years of the re-establishment of his authority, to suffer without remonstrance these limitations to his use of the signet. Even after his complete triumph in 1397, there is little evidence that the signet was restored to the position it had held during the rule of Michael de la Pole and Robert de Vere. It was extensively used, as we have seen, when there was some obvious utilitarian reason for its employment, as when Richard was in Ireland. But since the great and privy seals were as much under Richard's control as the signet itself, there was no reason for disturbing official tradition by otiose innovations. The signet was vitally important to Richard only in the years when he had incomplete control over chancery, exchequer and privy seal. When all offices of state and household were equally dependent on the king, the distinction between political and household administration ceased to have much more significance than it had in France.

We can trace the fluctuations of feeling in the complaints which the use of the signet provoked under Richard II. In the early years of the reign the murmurs of the commons continued as of old. The privy seal was still looked upon with suspicion, but the signet was now associated with it in popular disrepute. Thus, in the first parliament of the new reign in October 1377, the commons petitioned that the law was often delayed by letters of the privy seal and the secret signet, and were answered that the statutes on these points were to be strictly observed.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, in 1378 the commons at Gloucester complained of justices being hindered in performing their office and of individuals being summoned to attend the king's council

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de nostre counseill" to base upon it a warrant to chancery under privy seal. In the signet letter Richard asked for a grant of 6d. a day from the exchequer of Carmarthen to one of the archers of the royal livery. But the writ of privy seal, dated May 28, Westminster, changes "exchequer of Carmarthen" into "our exchequer [of Westminster]," charging the latter with the payment. It also alters the terms of the signet letter in other respects. The resultant patent, with the same date and place as the privy seal, was a mere translation of the French privy seal into Latin. By printing these three writs in succession as nos. 110, 111 and 112, Dr. Hall makes this point very clear.

<sup>1</sup> *Rot. Parl.* iii. 23.

by letters under great, privy or secret seal.<sup>1</sup> The complaints specially directed against the signet only begin after the abuse of it by the crown in the years between 1383 and 1386. Although the vigorous action taken in 1386 by the ministers appointed by the commons made petition and legislation unnecessary, the Merciless Parliament of 1388 once more emphasised the feeling of the estates by forcing the crown to embody in a statute the petition that no letter of the signet or secret seal should be sent out to the disturbance of the law and the damage of the realm.<sup>2</sup>

The comparative rarity of signet letters after this period shows that the action of the administration had even anticipated the declaration of the commons. The effect, in this relation, of the restoration of the king's authority in 1389 is brought out by the petition of the Westminster parliament, which met on January 17, 1390, that no charters of pardon should pass the chancery without a warrant of the privy seal. The king accepted this request, save in the cases where the chancellor could grant such pardons by his office, without having to speak to the king about it. But both petition and answer recognised the new intermediate link of the signet letter between the king and the office of privy seal. The signet letter was required, however, to be endorsed, by the chamberlain or the vice-chamberlain, with the name of the parties requesting the pardon, and it was insisted that such letter be sent and directed to the keeper of the privy seal.<sup>3</sup> The recognition of the signet letter for this particular type of business probably indicates a tendency towards its

<sup>1</sup> *Rot. Parl.* iii. 44. I have suggested previously that "signet" is here meant by the phrase "secret seal." The "secret signet" of *ib.* iii. 23, makes this practically certain.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* iii. 247; *Stat.* 11 R. ii. cap. x.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* iii. 268. The petition runs: "Et soient chargez le chamberleyn et souz-chamberleyn, le chamberleyn sur peyne de M. marcz, l'outre sur peyne de D. marcz. Et en chescun bille endosse et enseale desouz le signet et envoye al gardeyn de prive seal, soit mys le noun de celui qe demande la chartre: et qe nul chartre passe le chancellor sanz garrant de prive seal." The king replies: "Et que tiel bille (*i.e.* signet letter endorsed by chamberlain or sub-chamberlain with name of petitioner) soit envoye et directe al gardeyn de prive seal. Et que nul garrant de prive seal soit fait pur tiel chartre avoir, sinoun que le gardeyn de prive seal eit tiel bille endosse ou signe par le chamberleyn ou souz chamberleyn, come desus est dit. Et que nul chartre de pardon de treson ne d'autre felonie, passe la chauncellerie sanz garrant de prive seal, forseque en cas ou le chancellor le puisse graunter de son office, sans ent parler au roy." The chamberlain and sub-chamberlain were certainly not then keepers of the signet, but they were still apparently regarded as ultimately responsible for it.

general acceptance for all purposes which served the king's object. One of Richard's last acts of sovereignty, as he travelled through Wales from Ireland on his fatal journey to Flint, was to scatter pardons and releases under the signet to his special liegemen of the principalities of Wales and Chester.<sup>1</sup>

Among the charges brought against Richard in the parliament which recognised Henry IV. was one to the effect that Richard compelled the sheriffs of the realm to swear, in addition to their ancient oaths, that they would obey all his mandates under the great and privy seals, and also letters under his signet.<sup>2</sup> Richard, moreover, authenticated his testament after the French fashion, namely, with the great seal, the privy seal and his signet.<sup>3</sup> When at the last stage of all, Richard, "with a cheerful countenance," announced in the Tower his desire to release parliament from its allegiance, and declared that if it lay with him, the duke of Lancaster should be his successor, "as a sign of his intention and wish in the matter, he took the ring of gold of his patent signet from his finger, and put it on the finger of the duke."<sup>4</sup> The signet symbolised, to the monarch to whom symbols counted for so much, the very essence of personal sovereignty. When Henry of Lancaster challenged the throne in full parliament, as "descended in the right line of blood from Henry III.," and the estates tumultuously declared him to be their king, his first royal act was to show to the estates the signet king Richard had handed over to him as a token of his wishes.<sup>5</sup> Before the parlia-

<sup>1</sup> *Rot. Parl.* iii. 442.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* iii. 420. "Quod vicecomites per totum regnum suum ultra antiquum et solitum juramentum jurarent quod omnibus mandatis suis sub magno et privato sigillis suis ac etiam literis sub signeto suo quotienscumque eis directe fuerint obedirent." Cf. Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.* ii. 231.

<sup>3</sup> *Rot. Parl.* iii. 421; Nichols, *Royal Wills*, p. 201. Henry V.'s will was "sigillatum cum magno et privato sigillis ac signeto ipsius nuper regis, unacum quodam codicillo in quadam cedula paperea manu eiusdem nuper regis scripto et signeto suo de l'egle signato"; *Rot. Parl.* iv. 299. This is not a novelty. Cf. the wills of Edward II., Nichols, *Royal Wills*, p. 64; the Black Prince's, *ib.* p. 76, and Henry of Grosmont's, *ib.* p. 86.

<sup>4</sup> *Rot. Parl.* iii. 417. "Et in signum sue intentionis et voluntatis eiusmodi, anulum auri de signeto suo patente de digito suo tunc ibidem extraxit et digito dicti ducis apposuit, desiderans hoc ipsum, ut asseruit, omnibus regni statibus innotesci."

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* iii. 423. "Et statim ut idem rex ostendit statibus regni signetum Ricardi regis, sibi pro intersigno traditum sue voluntatis ut premittitur expressum, prefatus archiepiscopus dictum Henricum regem per manum dexteram apprehendens, duxit eum ad sedem regalem predictam."



ment separated, it cancelled all pardons and releases made under the signet or other such petty seals of the late king.<sup>1</sup>

## SECTION V

### THE SECRETARY AND THE SIGNET OFFICE UNDER RICHARD II

In the early days of Richard II. an official secretary of the king is clearly distinguishable for the first time. We have the certain testimony of the issue rolls that between August 20, 1377, and May 16, 1381, the office of king's secretary was held by Master Robert Braybrook, that Braybrook was then succeeded by John Bacon, who acted between May 16, 1381, and January 26, 1385, and that to both these clerks was assigned a *regardum*, or, as we should say, an *honorarium*, approaching £25 a year in amount.<sup>2</sup> At no point in our period was an important administrative innovation more unlikely than in the first few months of the reign of the boy king. We must, therefore, be prepared to admit either that an official secretary had already been in existence for some short time at least, and that Braybrook was simply his successor, or else that a new officer was appointed to meet the special conditions of the minority. There is something to be said for both these propositions. Unluckily, after careful investigation, no positive evidence that there was an official secretary under Edward III. can be educed. But we may venture to suggest that the tendency to limit the term secretary to the chamber clerks responsible for the secret seal, or for its

<sup>1</sup> *Rot. Parl.* iii. 442. "Et touz les pardons et relesses faitz desouz le signet ou autres tielx petites sealx, ou par bouche du dit nadgairs roy, soient repellez tout outrement." Pardons and releases under the great seal were, however, to be respected, though the interests of the new prince of Wales were involved.

<sup>2</sup> The whole passage is worth quoting, though it refers more particularly to Bacon than to Braybrook. It is in *I.R.* 505/24, under the date March 18, 1385. "Johanni Bacon, secretario regis . . . in persolucionem iiii<sup>xx</sup> xviiij *lib.* ipsum contingencium de regardo sibi faciendo, videlicet inter xvj<sup>m</sup> diem Maii, anno quarto regis huius, et xvj<sup>m</sup> diem Januarii, anno viij<sup>o</sup> . . . per quod quidem tempus idem Johannes stetit occupatus in officio predicto, et quod quidem regardum idem dominus rex liberare mandavit dicto Johanni pro eo quod alias tale regardum allocatum fuit venerabili patri Roberto, episcopo London., pro rata temporis inter xx<sup>m</sup> diem Augusti, anno primo, et xvj<sup>m</sup> diem Maii, anno quarto, quo tempore dictus episcopus stetit in officio supradicto."

successor, the signet, may well be an indication of the gradual evolution of an official keeper of the signet for such custody. Perhaps the need of a responsible person to keep the boy king's personal seal, which he himself was not in a position either to use or to look after, may have led the council of regency to institute the office, especially as, for the first few weeks of the reign, the young king's signet was used in the place of the privy seal until a new privy seal could be made for him. In the choice of the man for secretary there is evidenced clearly a wish to place the control of the signet, like the control of the privy seal, in the hands of one of the young king's personal followers. Braybrook, a licentiate of law and a well-beneficed clerk, sprang from a considerable knightly family in Northamptonshire. A kinsman of Richard on his mother's side, and one of the princess Joan's intimates,<sup>1</sup> he was particularly suited to keep the personal seal of the young king.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See above, iii. 330, n. 5.

<sup>2</sup> I do not share Sir Henry Maxwell-Lyte's hesitation ("it seems possible," *op. cit.* p. 114) as to Braybrook's having had the keeping of the seal. Unfortunately, Sir Henry missed the significance of *I.R.* 505/24, on which I rely to some extent. But there is other evidence which, to my mind, settles the question. Sir Henry (*op. cit.* p. 114) quotes from *A.P.* 9204, 9205, a document of 1380 in which the king ordered chancellor Sudbury to honour a petition from John Faulkner, enclosed, to present "son frere Howel Amadoc" to the "petite eglise" of Liddiard Millicent, Wilts. This "bill" of the signet is sealed with the seal of Sir Aubrey Vere, "par cause qe nostre clerke et nostre signet ne sont pas presentz a ceste foiz." The patent appointing Howel to Liddiard is dated December 4, 1380, at Northampton; *C.P.R.*, 1377-81, p. 561. A reasonable inference is that, according to normal chancery custom, the date of the signet communication was also December 4, or possibly a day or two earlier. Now, king and chancellor were at Northampton for the parliament which broke up on December 1, and remained there till December 6, when the expenses writs were issued. Braybrook only returned to London from the continent on December 1, and was not likely to have hurried to Northampton when the king's return was so imminent. The use of Aubrey's seal is thus explained by Braybrook still not having returned with his seal to the king. The use of Aubrey's seal shows the truth of my guess, in iii. 356 above, that he was already chamberlain in early December. I now feel confident that he was acting all through the Northampton parliament. It is significant that in the absence abroad of the secretary and the under-chamberlain, Burley, the responsibility for acts normally under the signet devolved on Vere as chamberlain. The signet was not yet quite dissociated from the chamber. Sir Henry rightly points out that the patent of presentation quotes no warrant, as "small churches" could be disposed of by the chancellor without warrant. A curious small point is that John Faulkner, surely an Englishman by his name, should have had a Welsh brother in the clerk Howel ap Madog of Newcastle. A further point of interest is that, although the document under the signet contains all the diplomatic formulae of informal letters under privy, secret, and

For the first three weeks the signet, described as *le signet de nostre anel*, was habitually used to seal documents normally issued under the privy seal. But as soon as the new privy seal was ready, the signet ceased to be thus employed, and there is no evidence that during Braybrook's secretaryship the signet was more important than it had been in the later years of Edward III. There is not even the suggestion that the secretary had necessarily to be in close attendance at court. Indeed, of Braybrook's three and three-quarter years of office, more than nine months were spent almost consecutively on the continent, where he had been despatched on two missions, which resulted in the marriage of the young king with Anne of Bohemia. The first mission, which took Braybrook to the court of Anne's brother, Wenceslas, king of the Romans and of Bohemia, lasted from June 18 to December 1, 1380. For the second mission, to meet the Bohemian envoys at Bruges, Braybrook was away from London between January 2 and March 23, 1381.<sup>1</sup> On this second embassy four additional envoys were appointed, and Braybrook's position was clearly subordinate.<sup>2</sup> He was

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signet seals and was sealed on the dorse, it describes itself as a "bill." This is the only such instance that I have come across, and I am tempted to believe that the word "bill" was written inadvertently. It does not seem reasonable that there was no real distinction between letters and bills; see above, pp. 113-115, 171-173, 205.

<sup>1</sup> Braybrook's accounts of his receipts and expenses on these journeys are preserved in *E.A.* 318/25, 27. His wages were at the high rate of 20s. a day. But out of that he had to pay all expenses, except those of the "passage and repassage" over the sea of himself, his men and his horses, of which latter he had nine on the first and twelve on his second journey. Ample advances from the exchequer, duly entered in *I.R.* 481, 484, 487, were made towards these expenses, but there was a "superplusagium," that is, a deficit, of £20 : 14 : 8 on the first, and of £48 : 15s. on the second expedition. The order to the exchequer to account with him is dated May 1, 1381, and can be read in *M.R.K.R.* 157, b.d.b. Easter, m. 5; compare m. 7. The appointment of Braybrook, Simon Burley, the sub-chamberlain, and Bernard van Sedles, "*miles camere nostre*," was made on June 12, 1380 (*Foedera*, iv. 90), so that the whole embassy was composed of chamber officers, for we may still regard the secretary as such. The second mission, constituted on December 26, was to treat of alliance with king Wenceslas, and included four more envoys of great dignity; *ib.* iv. 104. For Burley's accounts of his expenses on these two journeys, see above, iv. 340. It is curious that in the letters of appointment of the first mission, the lady is described as Catherine, daughter of the emperor Louis of Bavaria, though Wenceslas is spoken of as Richard's "brother."

<sup>2</sup> He was subordinate to John Gilbert, bishop of Hereford, and Hugh Segrave, the steward. See *I.R.* 481/21 for an issue to him "*secretario, existenti in comitua eorundem episcopi et senescalli apud Bruges.*"



not a member of the later deputations which concluded the marriage treaty and brought the bride to England. Indeed, two months after his return from Bruges, Braybrook ceased to be secretary, but he had his reward for his services when he was appointed by papal provision bishop of London, just in time to celebrate the marriage of Richard and Anne on January 20, 1382.<sup>1</sup> We have spoken already of his brief chancellorship.<sup>2</sup> After this we hear little about him in politics, but he retained the see of London until his death in 1404, when another ex-secretary, Roger Walden, took his place.

On May 16, 1381, Braybrook was succeeded as secretary by John Bacon, king's clerk, who, as we have seen, held office on the same conditions as his predecessor, until January 26, 1385. Bacon, like Braybrook, had been attached to the service of Richard before his accession.<sup>3</sup> He remained in his employment after that event. Probably he had served Richard's father before him.<sup>4</sup> He was much more the permanent official than Braybrook. Within two months of the king's accession he became chamberlain of the exchequer, and, a year later, keeper of the king's jewels. The latter post brought him into relations with the chamber. This facilitated, and perhaps explained, his appointment as secretary.<sup>5</sup>

Bacon's duplication of the secretaryship with an exchequer post between 1381 and 1385 meant that, whatever his status at court, his daily task was the routine work of a chamberlain of the exchequer, and that the presence of the secretary in the household was not considered indispensable. Yet during Bacon's secretaryship the signet grew so powerful that it was regarded as a sufficient warrant for the appointment of a chancellor, and was so much resented that, when parliament met, the abuse of the signet was denounced just as the unconstitutional use

<sup>1</sup> Above, iii. 383.

<sup>2</sup> Above, iii. 388-389, 402. It is interesting that he was appointed by signet letter; *Foedera*, iv. 150.

<sup>3</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1381-85, p. 552, shows this. It is an acquittance to Bacon, before leaving England in 1385, of all sums received by him on the king's behalf "both when he was prince and after his coronation, whilst the said John dealt with the payments of the king's chamber."

<sup>4</sup> I assume that he was the John Bacon who in 1364 was clerk-registrar of the Black Prince's privy seal. See later, pp. 380, 438.

<sup>5</sup> For Bacon's position in the exchequer and his indefinable relations with the chamber, see above, iv. 334-335.

of the privy seal had been denounced in earlier generations. Preferment was heaped upon the keeper of the king's signet. Bacon became dean of St. Martin's, when higher dignity caused Skirlaw to surrender that special preserve of the household clerk.<sup>1</sup> Cardinals thought it worth while to exchange prebends to meet his convenience.<sup>2</sup> After January 26, 1385, he ceased to draw wages and allowances on the old scale,<sup>3</sup> and at last gave up his exchequer post,<sup>4</sup> though he still kept on the office of secretary. On February 6, 1385, John Bacon and Sir Nicholas Dagworth were appointed as ambassadors to Urban VI., and to conclude an alliance with Florence and other Italian cities.<sup>5</sup> With them was associated the great English condottiere chief, Sir John Hawkwood, to treat for an alliance with king Charles of Sicily.<sup>6</sup> On March 13, the exchequer made Bacon a payment of £133 : 6 : 8 to meet his expenses on his embassies, and in recording the disbursement described him as king's secretary,<sup>7</sup> but with his departure from England he seems to have ceased to hold the office. He died at Genoa, where the *curia* then was, towards the end of the year.<sup>8</sup> When the news of his death reached the king, Richard caused to be celebrated, on November 27, a solemn mass and, next day, other funeral offices on his behalf in Westminster Abbey. Richard attended these services in person,<sup>9</sup> and his assiduity suggests that the former secretary was a strong favourite with him. So early

<sup>1</sup> This was treated as an exchange of benefices between Bacon and Skirlaw, the latter receiving a prebend of Shaftesbury, surrendered to him by Bacon. The mandate to induct Bacon to St. Martin's was issued on June 20, 1383; *C.P.R.*, 1381-85, pp. 281, 345.

<sup>2</sup> *Foedera*, vii. 427 (original edition).

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* vii. 455, 457.

<sup>4</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1377-81, p. 517. His successor was appointed on Jan. 27, 1385.

<sup>5</sup> *Foedera*, vii. 455, 457.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.* vii. 456. Power was given Bacon and Dagworth to pay Hawkwood for his services; *ib.* p. 458.

<sup>7</sup> *I.R.* 505/23; "Johanni Bacon, clerico, secretario domini regis, misso ex ordinacione domini regis et consilii sui versus curiam Romanam et ad regem Romanorum et Bohemie et aliis diuersis dominis in partibus extraneis, . . . super vadiis suis, £133 : 6 : 8d." The keeper of the wardrobe received "per manus Johannis Bacon, secretarii," £16, "pro feodis et robis in hospicio regis."

<sup>8</sup> Monk West. p. 72, who gives as the reason of his mission the king's desire to remove the privileges of Westminster Abbey for debtors. The records show that the charge of Bacon had a much wider scope than this.

<sup>9</sup> *Ib.* "Et utroque die ipsemet fuit presens in choro dum pro dicto clerico erat obsequium peragendum." The date of Bacon's death is not given.

as 1383, Bacon was distributing the king's offerings and gifts.<sup>1</sup>

Bacon's successor as secretary was Richard Medford, a clerk of Richard's private chapel, who had already received many marks of favour from his master. The organisation of the signet office, begun by Bacon, was continued, and, for the next two years, nearly all matters of importance were initiated by signet letters. Medford associated with himself John Lincoln of Grimsby, a pushing clerk who, like Bacon, had made his earlier career in the exchequer, of which he became one of the chamberlains in 1386.<sup>2</sup> Yet Lincoln's future was bound up with the little group of chaplains of Richard's private chapel, who became the chief instruments of the monarch's striving towards autocracy, and for the rest of the reign he was, in one capacity or another, closely connected with the signet, ultimately becoming its keeper with his appointment as secretary.

Unlike his predecessors, Medford was always in close attendance on the king. He took part in the abortive Scottish campaign of 1385, when still quite new to his office, with a retinue of five archers, and accompanied by John Lincoln, already described as "clerk in the office of the said secretary." An advance of wages was then made to Medford and Lincoln for themselves and their following.<sup>3</sup> On Medford's return from the expedition, he is recorded as being paid, in the capacity of agent of the keeper of the wardrobe, moneys for the expenses of the royal household.<sup>4</sup>

During this period and subsequently, Medford was shown special courtesy, and was given abundant rewards by his master. A signet letter of 1386, still preserved, had its authority heightened by the king's autograph signature.<sup>5</sup> As soon as Bacon's death

<sup>1</sup> *I.R.* 493/2; "pro oblacionibus regis et pro donis ipsius regis per manus Johannis Bacon."

<sup>2</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1385-89, p. 232. The grant "during good behaviour" is dated Oct. 27, 1386. I am more confident now than I was when I wrote vol. iv. that John Lincoln of Grimsby and John Lincoln of the signet office are the same person. Compare this with above, iii. 430, n. 3.

<sup>3</sup> *I.R.* 508/14. Payment on June 21, 1385, of £9, "Ricardo Metford, secretario regis, et Johanni de Lincolnia, clerico in officio dicti secretarii . . . super vadiis suis et v. sagittariorum secum retentorum ad proficiscendum in comitiua regis in viagio iam ordinato in propria persona ipsius domini regis versus partes Scocie."

<sup>4</sup> *I.R.* 510/12. The date is Nov. 22, 1385.

<sup>5</sup> *C.W.* 1352. It is signed "Richard." Though not the "earliest known signature of an English king" it is perhaps the first official document authenticated with a royal signature.



was known in England, Medford was appointed to succeed him as dean of St. Martin's le Grand.<sup>1</sup> He also received the arch-deaconry of Norfolk and numerous prebends.<sup>2</sup> Richard made a desperate effort to procure for him, in 1386, the bishopric of Bath and Wells,<sup>3</sup> but canonical election supplemented by royal consent availed not against the papal provision, which secured the see for Walter Skirlaw. When the storm of opposition to Richard and his ministers broke in the parliament of 1386, Medford was still only king's secretary. Nothing directly concerning him and his office was said in the grievances voiced by this unruly parliament, but an indirect reference was involved in the petition of the commons that all sorts of charters and patents made, in the time of Michael de la Pole's chancellorship, against the law, be annulled. This petition the king accepted "by the advice of its council," and its meaning became clear later. After the meeting of parliament on October 1, a writ in favour of Sir Simon Burley, warranted by signet letter, was duly enrolled, but when chancellor Arundel became conscious of his power, the remarkable memorandum was appended to the enrolment, that, on November 12, the king delivered these letters patent to the chancellor to be surrendered into chancery and cancelled, "because they were issued out of chancery irregularly, and are therefore cancelled."<sup>4</sup> This was to say, decorously but unmistakably, that the signet letter was no longer recognised in chancery as a lawful warrant for an act under the great seal. An abrupt stop was put to the practice which Bacon and Medford had made increasingly common since 1383. After October 18, no signet warranties for chancery instruments were accepted for several years.

From this time the records and chronicles show a silence about Medford's doings as secretary which stands in strong contrast to their full revelation of secretarial appointments and salaries between 1377 and 1385. The issue rolls no longer record the secretary's wages and allowances; the chancery rolls no longer describe the holder of the office by his official title as Braybrook

<sup>1</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1385-89, p. 67. This was on Nov. 26, 1385, and warranted "by signet letter."

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* pp. 14, 21, 72, 163, 195.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* p. 207, gives the signification to the pope of the royal consent on Aug. 15, 1386.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* p. 225. Compare above, iii. 417, which also gives other instances.

and Bacon, and to a less extent, Medford, in his earlier period of office, were described. We have every reason to believe that Medford remained in office and attended Richard on his uneasy wanderings through the length and breadth of the land for the greater part of 1387.<sup>1</sup> But with Thomas Arundel at the chancery and with every government office in London controlled by the hostile statutable commission, the king and his clerical favourites were powerless to do anything effective to stem the rising tide of aristocratic opposition. When, at last, Richard was forced, at the end of 1387, to return to Westminster and make his submission to the triumphant barons, the Merciless Parliament of 1388 carried through the process which the commons of 1386 had left only half done.

We owe to the pamphleteer of the opposition, Thomas Favent, our knowledge of the fact that Richard Medford was still the king's secretary<sup>2</sup> when the hands of the lords appellant fell heavily on the remaining friends of the king, throwing them into prison to await a trial before the estates, that was the very parody of a court of justice. Medford and his fellow-clerks were arrested soon after Christmas and sent to the Tower. John Lincoln, who since 1386 had also been chamberlain of the exchequer, shared their fate. After a short detention, the prisoners were, on January 4, 1388, sent to divers prisons, Lincoln to Dover Castle and Medford to Bristol Castle. They were brought back to the Tower in February<sup>3</sup> for their trial. But the sanguinary punishments inflicted on the leading lay culprits had satisfied even the zealots of the Merciless Parliament, and Medford and Lincoln were never brought before the estates. On June 4, most of the incriminated clerks, including Medford and Lincoln, were released on bail.<sup>4</sup> They pledged themselves to live peaceably in their own dwellings, not to gainsay the acts of parliament

<sup>1</sup> One of the few extant signet letters of the period is dated "Allercherch Aug. 14"; *C.W.* 1354/1. This is at least a suggestion of the secretary and signet being at that date with the king.

<sup>2</sup> Favent, p. 13. "Et ceteri clerici officarii, videlicet Ricardus Metteford, secretarius, Johannes Slake, decanus capelle, Johannes Lincoln, camerarius scaccarii, et Johannes (*rectius* Ricardus) Clifford, clericus capelle . . . diuersis Anglie carceribus usque in parlamentum ad imponenda responsuri sub aresto intrudi mandantur." See also above, iii. 434, n. 5.

<sup>3</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1385-89, pp. 382, 388, 394, 395, 414.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* p. 414.

and not to present themselves to the king's presence or to send him any business concerning the state.<sup>1</sup>

The acceptance by the king of the Merciless Parliament's petition that letters under the signet or secret seal were not to be issued to the disturbance of the law and the damage of the realm, cut off the chief abuses of the signet during Pole's chancellorship.<sup>2</sup> Bishop Arundel's refusal to accept signet instruments as chancery warrants destroyed their special value. So late as 1393 a nomination to the mayoralty of Northampton under the signet was overruled by the advice of the council, which declared that the person nominated was unqualified, notwithstanding any command of the king to the contrary.

In these circumstances there is no wonder that little is recorded as to the office of secretary. Lincoln's post as chamberlain had already been filled up, but there is no evidence that Medford's office had been taken up by any successor. To reconcile his promise with any resumption of his duties would not be easy, and both king and magnates probably thought it best to say nothing about the matter. Anyhow we read of no king's secretary for the next four years. Long before that, the pope conferred on Medford the see of Chichester<sup>3</sup> and it is hard to believe that in the long struggle before he obtained full possession of his see, he could have been deflected from his quest of preferment to take up again the humble duties of the king's secretary, though we know that to the end he remained a good friend of Richard II.

The absolute silence concerning the secretary between 1388 and 1392 implies either that the secretaryship had fallen into abeyance or that the holder was too obscure or inactive to attract contemporary notice. One striking entry on the register of bishop Wykeham, however, gives us a glimpse, not of the secretary, but of the signet. It records that on March 9, 1390, Wykeham being then chancellor, restored to the king his secret seal, namely, his ring.<sup>4</sup> One is tempted to guess that chancellor Arundel had

<sup>1</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1392-96, p. 167.

<sup>2</sup> *Rot. Parl.* iii. 247.

<sup>3</sup> He was nominated by the pope in Nov. 1388, but did not receive his temporalities till 1390. This was after a failure in 1389 to secure for him the see of St. David's. See above, iii. 457.

<sup>4</sup> *Wykeham's Register*, ii. 424 (Hampshire Record Soc.), "Memorandum quod die Mercurii, nono die Marcii, anno regni regis Ricardi secundi tercio decimo, venerabilis pater dominus Willelmus de Wykeham, Dei gratia episcopus Wintoniensis, apud Westmonasterium reddidit domino regi sigillum suum secretum,



impounded, or that bishop Medford had surrendered, the signet to the chancellor, so that it remained in his keeping, unused, until Wykeham handed it back to the king.

Two years later, both secretary and signet again vaguely come within our purview. John Macclesfield, whom we know already as an active clerk of the privy seal, may have received then or later, the secretary's office: but our only evidence is the fact that in 1392, Richard, in requesting the pope to confer preferment on him, three times describes him as his secretary.<sup>1</sup> Such a description, a generation or two earlier, would certainly have meant no more than confidant. Yet even early in Edward III.'s time, as we have seen, the word "secretary" was specially appropriate to describe the keeper of the secret seal, which, of course, had now become the signet.<sup>2</sup> It is not, therefore, impossible that the elder Macclesfield acted as a stopgap secretary between Medford getting his bishopric, on Wykeham's restoration of the signet to the king, and an undoubted secretary re-appearing in 1392-93 with Roger Walden. But, between February 14, 1390, and January 17, 1393, Macclesfield's signature appears on signet letters. That I regard as an almost certain indication that he was only a clerk of the signet, and as strengthening rather than weakening the opinion that the signet was entrusted to his care. The application of the title "secretary" to the *de facto* keeper of the signet is perfectly understandable. Macclesfield's modest status in 1387 is shown by the grant to him of the normal wage of a privy seal clerk, namely 7½d. a day until he obtained a competent benefice.<sup>3</sup> When, after 1389, Richard

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videlicet annulum." This is clearly the signet and certainly not the privy seal as the editor of the Register suggests; *ib.* p. 647.

<sup>1</sup> *Cal. Pap. Reg. Let.* iv. 428, where there are three provisions, dated May 1392 to canonries at York, Lichfield and Salisbury by Boniface IX. "at the petition of king Richard, whose secretary he is," notwithstanding the laws against pluralities. However, a writ on *ib.* p. 430, dated June 15, grants to John Macclesfield, clerk of the diocese of Lichfield, "at the petition also of king Richard, whose secretary he is," that the preceptory of St. Anthony's, London, be given him "in commendam," so that he shall enjoy the privileges of former preceptors. This enables us to identify Macclesfield with J. Macclesfield the elder, clerk of the privy seal, spoken of above, iv. 386, n. 1, who was clerk of the great wardrobe, 1398-99; *ib.* pp. 385-386.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 180, n. 2.

<sup>3</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1385-89, p. 344, a grant of Aug. 11, 1387, until his promotion to a benefice "according to the statute of the household." Curiously enough, Macclesfield was given, so early as Sept. 8, the living of Mackworth, Derby; *ib.* p. 345; already in 1291 it was worth £30 a year (*Tax. Eccles. Pope Nich.* p. 246).

again tried to make himself a real king, we at once find material that enables us to take up the broken history of the secretariat. More important still, we can now combine with the story of the individual secretaries that of the "office of the signet" from which all our modern secretarial offices of state were to spring.

We are on firm ground once more when Roger Walden, treasurer of Calais, was transferred, somewhere about 1393, to the office of king's secretary. Of Walden's career and character enough has been said already. But we must be on our guard against accepting too literally the unfavourable judgments which many of his contemporaries passed upon him.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps the worst thing against him is that, for the six remaining years of the reign, he enjoyed Richard's unbroken confidence, first as secretary, then as treasurer, and finally as archbishop of Canterbury.

The exact moment of Walden's assumption of the secretariat is difficult to determine. He was responsible for the treasurer-ship of Calais up to 1392-93 (16 Richard II.), but he was king's secretary before October 16, 1393.<sup>2</sup> By July 27, 1394, in less than a year, he had regulated the accounts of his successor at Calais, who died after a short term of office.<sup>3</sup> He had not been long in the saddle when he accompanied Richard on his first visit to Ireland, reaching Waterford with the king on October 2, 1394,<sup>4</sup> attended by his little train of two esquires and four horse archers. During the succeeding months, he reconstructed the signet secretariat so thoroughly that Richard again had, for the first time since 1386, an organised secretarial office that responded instantly to his wishes. Walden had the assistance of the sometime secretary, Richard Medford, now both bishop of Chichester and treasurer of Ireland,<sup>5</sup> and of John Lincoln of Grimsby. Lincoln appears as the head of a small, but efficient, office of the signet, rather than as the personal clerk of an isolated official.<sup>6</sup>

The signet was brought into fuller use than it had been since before 1386. The numerous safe conducts with which Richard lured the Irish chieftains to his presence were authenticated not only with the great seal of the Irish chancery, but also with the

<sup>1</sup> For Walden see above, iii. 490-492 and iv. 7, 26, 49.

<sup>2</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1391-96, p. 520, so describes him at that date.

<sup>3</sup> *I.R.* 548/14, 19.

<sup>5</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1391-96, pp. 584, 621.

<sup>4</sup> See above, iii. 488-492.

<sup>6</sup> See above, p. 216, n. 3.

"secret signet."<sup>1</sup> The red wax generally used for them suggests that they were regarded rather as household than as chancery instruments.<sup>2</sup> It was with the signet also that Richard authenticated his correspondence to the administration in England. A more legitimate and less provocative use of signet letters than had prevailed between 1383 and 1386 did something to bring back into repute the seal discredited by former abuse. So frequently was it employed that it was almost recognised as a seal of state. In July 1395, a messenger was sent with letters to be sealed by the keeper of the privy seal and the secretary, as co-ordinate sealing authorities.<sup>3</sup> Clearly the composition of the letters was done in the signet office, and the affixing of the seal was, in such circumstances, almost a purely formal action.

The most interesting feature of Richard II.'s first Irish visit is not so much to be found in the use of the signet, as in the mass of "notarial instruments" which recorded the submissions of the Irish chieftains to the English king. It would be interesting to know who were responsible for them. Many of them have come down to us and are now available in print, thanks to Professor Curtis of Dublin.<sup>4</sup> The "public form" in which they were drafted leaves nothing to be desired and attests the competence of the notaries employed. Of these notaries we know two names only, those of Thomas Sparkford, clerk, of the diocese of Bath and Wells, and Robert Boleyn, clerk,<sup>5</sup> of the diocese of Ely. Both were papal and imperial notaries. Now, apart from the signet and its clerks, the only administrative office to which Richard had easy access was the Irish chancery, whose chancellor, Robert Waldby, archbishop of Dublin, followed

<sup>1</sup> The letters quoted in Prof. E. Curtis's *Richard II. in Ireland, 1394-95* (1927), prove this, for instance p. 140, a request of "Maurichius McGyngusse" "quod litteras salui vestri conductus, tam vestro sigillo regis quam eciam signeto vestro secreto sigillatas, . . . mittatis." Other letters of conduct were only "sub magno vestro sigillo"; *ib.* p. 127. This must be the Irish seal, as the English great seal was in England.

<sup>2</sup> Curtis, *op. cit.* p. 109 "quandam litteram sub rubea cera sigillatam" is only one of many instances.

<sup>3</sup> *I.R.* 553/22, "nuncio misso versus custodem priuati sigilli regis et secretarium domini regis predicti pro diuersis litteris ab eisdem sigillandis."

<sup>4</sup> Curtis, *op. cit.* Unluckily Mr. Curtis was not interested in the diplomatic problems suggested by the documents which he printed, but despite a tendency to abbreviate "common form," he has done his work so well that he has given us sufficient material to deal with them.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* pp. 59-60, 67, 65, 99.



Richard to England and accepted an English see. The business arrangements for the surrenders, the correspondence with the Irish magnates, must, therefore, have fallen largely on Walden, Lincoln and their assistants. The latter included several of the incriminated clerks of 1386, notably Medford. Thus the signet in Ireland prepared the way for Richard's later aspirations.

When, early in 1395, the duke of Gloucester was sent by the king from Ireland to England to plead before parliament for a large subsidy to meet the costs of the Irish campaign,<sup>1</sup> Walden accompanied him, and had his expenses to and fro, and of his tarrying in England, paid by the king.<sup>2</sup> During his absence Lincoln seems to have had sole charge of the signet and its office. It was then that he wrote and signed the important letter of December 1, 1395, instructing the council as to the various parties and races in Ireland and explaining, with rare insight and sympathy, the grievances of the "Irish rebels."<sup>3</sup> But the only result of parliament was a pressing request for the king to return. Accordingly Walden once more crossed to Ireland and finally returned with Richard in October. Meanwhile treasurer Waltham had died and, before Walden was back in London, he had been, on September 20, appointed his successor.<sup>4</sup>

John Lincoln then succeeded to the post of king's secretary, having already given full proof of his competence. His special services were recognised by a *regardum* of a hundred marks, and a mass of forfeited plate was some compensation for his great expenses, labours and diligence all through the expedition, notably in paying the wages of the mariners who served the ships "arrested" for the king's voyage with his army to Ireland and back.<sup>5</sup> He remained in office for the rest of his master's reign,

<sup>1</sup> Above, iii. 494.

<sup>2</sup> *I.R.* 549/13, where under Feb. 25 is recorded the payment of £50 "Roger Walden, secretario regis, venienti in comitiua ipsius ducis Gloucestrie de partibus Hibernie versus regnum Anglie . . . pro custubus et expensis suis, tam pro mora sua in Anglia super eisdem negociis quam pro redditu suo ad partes predictas."

<sup>3</sup> See above, iv. 7.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.*

<sup>5</sup> *I.R.* 556/15, "Johanni Lincoln, clerico, secretario regis, in denariis sibi liberatis per manus Johannis Swyft, clerici sui, c marcas, et in precio diuersorum vessellorum argenti de forisfactura sibi venditorum 1 marcas in persolucionem c marcarum quas dominus rex sibi liberare mandauit, nomine specialis regardi de dono suo pro magnis custubus, laboribus et diligenciis per ipsum habitis in Anglia circa soluciones vadiorum marinariorum nauium arrestarum pro viagio ipsius domini regis de partibus Anglie usque in terram

accompanying him on his second, as on his first, expedition to Ireland.<sup>1</sup> Yet his faithful service did not prevent his making his peace with Henry of Lancaster and receiving ratification by the new king of his various ecclesiastical preferments.<sup>2</sup>

There is little to say about the work of the signet in the last years of the reign. Richard clearly had no intention of using it as he had in his first attempt at autocracy. No longer employed as a warrant for chancery, there is the scantiest evidence of its activities to be found in the chancery rolls.<sup>3</sup> Indeed with a chancery and a privy seal entirely under royal control, it was easier, as well as less invidious, for the king to use the accredited channels for giving effect to his wishes. The use of the signet was limited rather to the king's personal correspondence. For instance, his letter to the pope on behalf of St. Albans, in which he mendaciously dwells on the poverty and remoteness of the great abbey and the unfertile region in which it is situated,<sup>4</sup> was sealed with the signet.

Perhaps the most important thing during these years was the steady consolidation of the signet office. There had already been considerable steps taken in this direction, notably by Lincoln, when he was in charge of the office in Ireland. When he became established in England, John Swift, clerk in the office of the signet, stood to Lincoln as Lincoln had once stood to Walden. In 1396 Swift was only "the clerk abiding with John Lincoln the secretary."<sup>5</sup> Next year he received for his good service, as a "clerk writing at the king's signet," a pension from the exchequer until he was promoted to an adequate benefice.<sup>6</sup>

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Hibernie; et similiter pro solucione dictorum marinariorum et aliorum de nouo arrestatorum pro redditu ipsius domini regis cum exercitu suo." The date, Dec. 4, 1397, shows that the king's bounty only materialised more than two years after the event.

<sup>1</sup> *Foedera*, viii. 78. His "protection" is dated April 18, 1399.

<sup>2</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1399-1401, pp. 24-25.

<sup>3</sup> See for instance *C.C.R.*, 1396-99, p. 503, indicating that a petition of magnates was delivered by the chancellor to the archbishop, by virtue of a letter of the king's signet on the chancery file of the year. This is not a warrant, but a direction to the chancellor to treat the document in a certain way.

<sup>4</sup> *C. Pap. Reg. Let.* iv. 294. This was both written under the signet and signed by the king.

<sup>5</sup> *I.R.* 556/18, "clerico pence Johannem Lincoln, secretarium regis, com-moranti."

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.* 559/2, "Johanni Swyft, clerico, scribenti ad signetum regis . . . pro bono seruicio impenso et impendo."

He was, in 1397, described as "Lincoln's clerk,"<sup>1</sup> and as "one of the clerks in the king's signet office," and took his turn when the king had a chance of nominating one of his clerks to receive the pension which a newly appointed bishop was bound to pay to an unbeneficed royal clerk.<sup>2</sup> Nor was Swift the only subordinate clerk. For the twelve years between 1387 and 1399, Robert Fry, properly a clerk of the privy seal, divided his time so effectively between that office and the office of the signet that the king granted him a pension of £10 a year "for his good and willing service in that office and in the office of the signet."<sup>3</sup> How many clerks of the signet there were altogether during the reign, and how many served at the same time, I have not been able to ascertain. But from the signed signet letters<sup>4</sup> I have compiled a tentative list of them, which I append to this section.<sup>5</sup>

Thus a signet office slowly came into being. Its development was helped by the experience some of its early members had gained in other offices. Thus both Bacon and Lincoln had served some time as chamberlains of the exchequer. Bacon had also some experience of chamber work. Macclesfield had been a clerk of the privy seal. Walden had been treasurer of Calais, and Fry brought to the signet the experience of the privy seal office in which he began his career, and which always seems to have claimed his chief attention. Of the leading personalities, Medford, a clerk of the king's private chapel, was almost the only one who had not had administrative training in some department of the government. After Richard II.'s fall departmental interchange went on as before, John Prophet, the sometime secondary of the privy seal, succeeding Lincoln under Henry IV. It became the custom to appoint the king's secretary by the king putting his signet into his hand.<sup>6</sup> All through the fifteenth century, and indeed beyond, the intimate relations between the privy seal and the signet continued.<sup>7</sup> Finally the office of the signet

<sup>1</sup> *I.R.* 556/15.

<sup>2</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1396-99, p. 233. There had been a previous attempt to secure for Swift, then called king's clerk, such a pension in 1393 (*C.C.R.*, 1392-96, p. 235), and there was a later one in 1398; (*ib.* 1396-99, p. 279). It looks as if the king had some difficulty in carrying through his wishes.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* pp. 461-462; *C.P.R.*, 1396-99, p. 463.

<sup>4</sup> See above, p. 205.

<sup>5</sup> Below, p. 230.

<sup>6</sup> Nicholas, *O.P.C.* VI. cix.

<sup>7</sup> A good late instance of this is Richard Taverner, a clerk whom Wolsey removed from Cambridge to Cardinal College, Oxford. In 1536 Cromwell made



consisted of four chief clerks who, in later days, derived large incomes from the fees on writs, though their work had become largely formal, and their duties nominal.

Signets and secretaries were not limited to the English crown. The Black Prince<sup>1</sup> and his widow,<sup>2</sup> his grandmother, queen Isabella,<sup>3</sup> and his mother, queen Philippa,<sup>4</sup> and the two queens of his son, Richard II.,<sup>5</sup> had both the seal and the officer. Richard II., we know, sometimes used his queen's signet when his own was not available.<sup>6</sup> Every noble had, besides his "seal," his "signet."<sup>7</sup> Abroad, the secretary became everywhere the confidential minister of his master, until in the age of Commynes and Machiavelli the secretary of the prince was everywhere regarded as his natural mainstay and helper.

The attempts to make the signet the special engine of prerogative perished with Richard II. Under the restricted conditions of fifteenth-century kingship, the signet, following precisely the fate of the privy seal in a previous age, simply became another cog in the already complicated wheel of administrative machinery. Down to the late seventeenth century, it was still regarded as the special seal of the king in his private capacity, and as appropriate for sealing his private letters.<sup>8</sup> But in practice it was becoming another public seal and its personal relation to the king merely survived in the circumstance that it first set in motion the elaborate machinery of fifteenth and

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him a clerk of the privy seal and in 1537 he obtained license to marry, after which he was considered to be a layman. By 1541 he also had a place in the signet office, which he retained up to the death of Henry VIII. See for details Prof. Pollard's article on him in *D.N.B.*

<sup>1</sup> His will was authenticated by "noz priue et secrete sealz"; Nichols, *Royal Wills*, p. 76.

<sup>2</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1381-85, p. 481, refers to Thomas Walton, king's clerk, secretary of the king's mother.

<sup>3</sup> *E.A.* 393/4.

<sup>4</sup> See below, Chap. XVIII. § 1.

<sup>5</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1396-99, p. 103, refers to Mr. Richard Courcy, secretary of queen Isabella, who had 40 marks a year from the exchequer.

<sup>6</sup> See above, p. 204.

<sup>7</sup> For instance, Henry, duke of Lancaster, who authenticated his will by "nostre seel ensemblent ove nostre signet"; Nichols, p. 86.

<sup>8</sup> "The signet is one of the king's seals, and is used in sealing his private letters, and all such grants as pass his Majesty's hands by bill as signed; which seal is always in the custody of the king's secretaries; and there are four clerks of the signet office attending them"; T. Blount's *Law Dictionary* (3rd ed. 1717); cf. Coke's *Institutes*, fol. 555.

sixteenth century administrative procedure. In the same way the king's secretary gradually became, like the keeper of the privy seal, an officer of state whom parliament and barons sought to make responsible for the king's actions. The chief step in this direction, made during the fifteenth century, was effected by an ordinance of 1444; but the growth of the importance of the secretary in Tudor times naturally emphasised still further the public and official, as opposed to the personal, character of the signet.

A significant survival of the old tradition was that all through the fifteenth century it was very usual to promote the secretary to be keeper of the privy seal. Not until Henry VIII. had long been on the throne was the first layman permitted to hold the office of king's secretary, in the person of Thomas Cromwell.<sup>1</sup> Even as late as 1689, the two "principal secretaries" were, with the four clerks of the signet and the four clerks of the privy seal, attached to the chamber.<sup>2</sup>

While these tendencies were being worked out, the process of obtaining royal letters on behalf of a subject was still further complicated by the development of the "signed bill" or "warrant under the sign manual." This was the bill or petition received by the king and handed on by him to some official, ultimately, of course, the chancellor, to have the prayer carried out formally. It was authenticated by the "sign manual," that is, the king's signature, or initials, written by his own hand. Many early signet letters are also authenticated by the "sign manual," but in later times the sign manual was but another complication of procedure. At last methods were stereotyped by an act of 27 Henry VIII., "concerning the clerks of the signet and the privy seal." After that date, the process of obtaining letters patent under the great seal had, or might have, to pass through some half dozen stages. First, there was the warrant under the sign manual. On this was based the king's bill, drawn up by the Clerk of the Patents, and setting forth the whole form of the patent. Thirdly, there was the signet bill, drawn up by the clerks of the privy signet at the signet office, from a collation of the two earlier documents, lodged in the office for the purpose.

<sup>1</sup> Nicholas, *O.P.C.* I. cxxxii.

<sup>2</sup> *Household Ordinances*, Soc. Ant. 1790, p. 406.

This signet bill was addressed to the keeper of the privy seal, who in turn caused the drawing up of the writ (or bill) of privy seal. The writ of privy seal was then lodged in the chancery and retained as the warrant of the chancellor for issuing the ultimate result of this long game of circumlocution, the letters patent under the great seal. Fortunately, there were means of expediting matters when a "signed bill," under the sign manual, directly instructed the chancellor to prepare a patent, or when an "immediate warrant" of the secretary of state dispensed both with the signet and privy seal stages, though not with the fees payable to the offices thus passed over.<sup>1</sup>

The procedure defined by the act of Henry VIII. lasted until comparatively recent times. It was not until 1851 that the necessity for the signet ended and the office of the signet was abolished. Even then, the use of the signet still survived in certain proceedings of the foreign and colonial offices, and to this day the "grant and delivery of the seals," which gives a secretary of state his legal status, involves among other things, the delivery of a signet to each secretary on his appointment.<sup>2</sup>

We must not follow the history of the signet or of the other "small seals" beyond 1399: but before dismissing this branch of our subject, it is perhaps worth while to recapitulate briefly the general bearing of all the processes which we have been endeavouring to trace in detail.

From the days of John to those of Henry VIII. the history of

<sup>1</sup> These steps are elaborately treated by Maxwell-Lyte.

<sup>2</sup> For the recent history of the signet, see Anson, *Law and Custom of the Constitution*, part ii., especially pp. 44-47, 154, 160, 253, 256 and 407. Mrs. Higham's chapter ix. on the "Signet Office" and her emphasis on the distinction between it and the secretary's office, described in chapter viii. of her *Principal Secretary of State, 1558-1680*, will indicate the bridge between the original conditions of the office and the modern system abolished in the nineteenth century. A detailed study of the secretaries and the signet office between 1399 and the days of Thomas Cromwell is still much needed. A beginning in this direction has already been made by Mrs. Higham in her "Note on the Pre-Tudor Secretary" in *Essays in Mediaeval History presented to T. F. Tout*, pp. 361-366. Some important material bearing on the relations of the signet and secretary, and the privy seal and its keeper, to the administrative system under the Lancastrian kings will be found in T. F. T. Plucknett's suggestive "Place of the Council in the Fifteenth Century" in *Royal Hist. Soc. Transactions*, 4th Ser. i. 157-189. The crucial date is 1444, when an edict of Henry VI. affirmed the legality of chancery writs warranted by the signet, the sign manual, etc., as if they were warranted by the privy seal. The result was that the secretary became for the first time an important administrative official.



the petty seals constantly repeats itself. There is the perpetual effort to distinguish by a visible token between the king as an official and the king in his personal capacity. There are the equally unending struggles of the king to extricate himself from the network of red tape which choked his personal initiative and hedged his authority by forms and routine which destroyed his individual will. But the office was greater than the man, and the strongest king could not successfully distinguish between the two. Even in the age of Angevin despotism, routine stayed the hand of the autocrat. When the barons laid hands upon the administrative system and employed it for their own purposes, the process was further accelerated. M. Morel stated a profound truth when he emphasised the perpetual "reduplications of the signet," which he signalises in French history. His doctrine has an added significance for us in England, where the barons' constitutional control of the monarchy was so much more permanent than in France. The great seal itself started as the personal seal of the sovereign. It was hardly "officialised" when the privy seal, a personal "signet" in origin, became in the course of the fourteenth century as official, as stereotyped and as formal as the great seal itself. The attempts to revert to the original idea of the privy seal produced the "secret seal," the griffin, the signet and their like. Each of these personal seals underwent the fate of their predecessors or ceased to exist. The "sign manual," usurping the place of a seal, had exactly the same fate. Thus, a study which, in its details, seems trifling and "antiquarian" to the last degree can be made to throw a new, if flickering, light on the broad currents of English constitutional history. In the failure of the sovereign to preserve a personal seal we see the whole process of our constitutional development. And in the collapse of the last avowed attempt at autocracy in the revolution of 1399 we have a real reason for drawing our study to a close. Henceforth no manifestation of the royal authority can be divested of its official character, can be freed from the constitutional control of the aristocratic and official class. The very ring which the king wore on his finger, the personal letters which he wrote or dictated, could not be regarded as the acts of a private person. Royal efforts to escape the inevitable did but add to the complications of

an already cumbrous routine. Not until the nineteenth century were most of these unintelligible survivals of forgotten struggles cleared away. Yet not all of them went. We still have signets, though there is no signet office, just as we still have a keeper of the privy seal, though there is no longer a privy seal for him to keep. These things and their like have survived the centuries as mere picturesque encumbrances to the machinery of the English state.

## APPENDIX TO SECTION V

## CLERKS OF THE SIGNET

Indecipherable name	Feb. 27, 1386.	<i>C.W.</i> 1349/42.
Bucknell.	Sept. 5, 1389 to after 1393.	<i>Ib.</i> 1354/4, 9, 60. <i>P.S.O.</i> 1/1/5a, 7a, 8a, 12a, 13a, 14a, 15a, 18a, 19a, 21a.
Crull.	Sometime between Nov. 14, 1397 and 1401.	<i>Ib.</i> 1/1/25a.
Fremington.	1387-88.	<i>Ib.</i> 1/1/4a.
Hinton.	Feb. 28, 1396 to May 27, 1399.	<i>C.W.</i> 1354/19, 21, 22, 26, 27, 28a, 31. <i>Ib.</i> 1355/30, 39.
Lincoln.	Sept. 8, 1392 to Feb. 24, 1393.	<i>Ib.</i> 1354/16 ; 1355/58.
Macclesfield.	Feb. 14, 1390 to Jan. 17, 1393.	<i>Ib.</i> 1354/3, 12, 14. 1355/5, 10, 51. <i>P.S.O.</i> 1/1/6a, 9a, 10a, 11a, 16a.
Swift.	Feb. 27, 1396 to Dec. 22, 1397.	<i>C.W.</i> 1354/18, 20, 25.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### TWO LESSER HOUSEHOLDS

#### SECTION I

##### THE QUEEN'S HOUSEHOLD

###### (A) INTRODUCTORY. SCOPE OF THE SURVEY

A QUEEN'S household would seem likely to be the most important in the realm after that of the king himself. Though the very intimacy of its connection with the ruling sovereign might tend to rob it of individuality, yet its dignity was so great and its resources and operations so considerable that it deserves separate treatment even at the times when it was not functioning independently, but was treated as an appendage of the king's household. The aim of the present section is to connect and amplify information on this subject scattered in earlier volumes, and to carry the story a stage further. Our starting-point must be the year 1236, when Henry III. set up a wardrobe for his newly married wife, Eleanor of Provence. That was the first of the new developments essayed after the main structure of household organisation had been already erected,<sup>1</sup> and its history is here to be traced over a period of more than a hundred and fifty years, through the lifetimes of seven queens, ending with that little Isabella of France, second wife of Richard II., who was not yet ten years old when her husband lost his throne in 1399.<sup>2</sup> As an administrative unit it

<sup>1</sup> See above, i. 240 and 252-253.

<sup>2</sup> To make a survey so extensive in a period of little more than six months, of which two only were available for full-time work, is an adventure in speed too dangerous to be justified except by the circumstances which have been explained in the preface to this volume. For the first three queens I have relied on my own material, the nucleus of which had been already collected



became increasingly worthy of study as it expanded in size and developed fresh machinery, partly of its own initiative, partly in reflection of ingenuities devised in the king's household. By the end of our period we shall find it with wardrobe, great wardrobe and privy wardrobe, chamber and exchequer, from all of which issue records of interest. We shall watch it dealing with large resources and wide lands; we shall find it in the closest contact with the parent body from which it sprang, sometimes as prop, sometimes as burden; we shall see it pass through good and evil days, desperate at times in the effort to make means meet ends, often unpopular, always noticeable and noticed. In fact, we should be failing utterly to adopt the mediaeval point of view if we did not assign to it a prominent place in any survey of administrative history.

This section will deal first with the general organisation of the queen's household; next with its finances; finally with its secretarial functions.

#### (B) GENERAL ORGANISATION AND STAFF

Eleanor of Provence, with whom our story opens, was for thirty-six years queen consort (1236-72) and for nineteen queen mother (1272-91), though in July 1276 she took the veil at Amesbury and henceforth described herself in her letters merely as "humble nun of the order of Fontevrault." The increasing dignity, size and splendour of her household in Henry III.'s reign are attested by the large receipts and expenses analysed in its accounts,<sup>1</sup> while the bulk of its correspondence after her son Edward I. became king bears witness to its continued activities. Even as nun Eleanor retained her possessions, and though some of the letters she wrote during that period related to convent affairs,<sup>2</sup> others still

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at intervals since 1914, but have been much helped by what Dr. Tout has said in passing in earlier volumes. For the next two, thanks to the generosity of Dr. Tout and Dr. Broome, I have had their notes as well as my own. For the last two I have relied exclusively upon material supplied by Dr. Broome. I owe much to the kindness of Mr. Charles Johnson and Mr. V. H. Galbraith, who made valuable criticisms and suggestions on my first draft of the section.

<sup>1</sup> See below, pp. 267-270.

<sup>2</sup> Such as that begging Edward to persuade the king of Sicily not to interfere with the franchises of the order of Fontevrault (*A.C.* xvi. 156), or that securing for the Amesbury house release from arrears of rent (*ib.* 206).

concerned her lands or her wards, in some cases assigned to her after retirement.<sup>1</sup> Her court, as we catch glimpses of it in the king's records or her own,<sup>2</sup> with her ladies in attendance, the clerks who acted as chaplains, almoners, or men of business, the doctors who attended her rather frequent illnesses, or advised her when she embarked upon some kindly but peremptory nursing scheme,<sup>3</sup> the knights, squires and yeomen attached, as well as the large staff of indoor and outdoor servants, was of impressive size, and was swelled by the presence of young heirs under her guardianship until they should attain their majority, and also, from time to time, of her children or grand-children.<sup>4</sup> The royal accounts contain many references to building and repairs in her houses up and down the country, and a few of the reports or inquiries of her bailiffs have survived among the chancery records.<sup>5</sup>

In most of these respects, however, precedents for the household arrangements of Eleanor of Provence could be found in those of earlier queens. The special interest of her establishment is that it was the first, as Dr. Tout has shown,<sup>6</sup> to have a wardrobe of its own, accounting, after the first twenty months of its existence, direct and separately to the exchequer. Its head was a

<sup>1</sup> It was not till 1280, for example, that a settlement was reached about lands assigned to Eleanor in France (see below, p. 269), and ten years later eight manors were delivered to her in fulfilment of a promise of 1000 marks a year "in augmentation of her maintenance and for her household" (*C.C.R.*, 1288-96, p. 84).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the lists of those going beyond seas with the queen in 1262 (*C.P.R.*, 1258-66, pp. 218, 219) or the details of jewels presented to the household in, e.g., *E.A.* 349/12.

<sup>3</sup> She writes, for example, to her son to ask him to excuse Geoffrey of Genville, who has come to see her at Guildford, and is ill of a tertian, which the doctors say will get worse if he is not careful (*A.C.* xvi. 171, xii. 164). From Amesbury she wrote urging the king not to carry out his intention of taking his young son Edward with him to the north. "When we were there we could not avoid being ill, because of the bad air, so we beg you to arrange some place of sojourn for him in the south, where the air is good and temperate" (*A.C.* xvi. 170).

<sup>4</sup> Her wardrobe account for 1249-50 includes *minute expense* for her son Edward, then ten years old (*Pipe*, No. 93, m. 1); her expenditure on fruit and electuaries in 1252 was increased by the illness of his younger brother Edmund (*E.A.* 349/10); and the same child's clothing, horses, etc., appear in *E.A.* 349/18, 19. The last trace of Edward before he had an establishment of his own is in a sum allotted among the queen's accounts of 1253-54 *in expensis Edwardi filii regis extra curiam per se* (*Pipe*, No. 97, m. 9).

<sup>5</sup> *A.C.* xi. 11, 24, 42, 46.

<sup>6</sup> See above, i. 252-255.

keeper (*custos garderobe regine*),<sup>1</sup> assisted by a colleague who kept a counter-roll as a check upon him, and who was the predecessor of the later controller (*contrarotulator*) though he did not as yet bear that title. Of the five successive keepers of Eleanor's wardrobe, John of Gaddesden, Guy of Lapalud, Walter of Bradley, James of Aigueblanche, and Hugh of Penne,<sup>2</sup> two, namely Bradley and Penne, had previously kept the counter-roll, and remained long in office, the former certainly for five years, possibly for eight, the other for no less than fifteen. Their association with the household seems closer than that of Gaddesden, whose multifarious activities in the royal service kept him so busy that once at least his clerk Robert del Ho had in his stead to present the queen's accounts for audit,<sup>3</sup> or Lapalud, who was probably a Savoyard, and was sent abroad on royal business in 1244,<sup>4</sup> or his fellow-countryman James of Aigueblanche, who was released because he wanted to continue his studies and attend to the cure of his benefices.<sup>5</sup> It would be difficult to say how many clerks were employed besides the two chief ones, for individuals combined various functions. Peter de Alpibus, for example, the queen's physician, who may be the same man as Peter the leech of Jonzac,<sup>6</sup> kept one of two counter-rolls "against" John of

<sup>1</sup> Though clerks of the royal chancery sometimes described him as treasurer (*R.G.* i. 239) or as chamberlain (*C.Lib.R.*, 1226-40, p. 343). Eleanor's chamber was not an office, but simply her bedroom, used as a storing-place for valuables. A jewelled girdle given to her was described as *liberata ad cameram regine* (*E.A.* 349/13, m. 1). Clasps were presented in 1253 to Geoffrey of Sutton, *hostiarius camere regine* and Simon, *hostiarius garderobe regine*, and a cheaper one to William of Mulested, *subhostiarius camere regine* (*E.A.* 349/12). An account for 1252-53 lists separately the *expense camere regine* (*E.A.* 349/19).

<sup>2</sup> For details, especially as to Gaddesden, see above, i. 254, and *D.N.B.* Gaddesden kept up his connection long after he ceased to be keeper, for he is named in 1254 among those who are going overseas in Eleanor's company. The keeper's fee seems to have been forty marks annually. Lapalud in 1243 was granted this sum from the king's wardrobe until he should be provided with a benefice of equivalent value. Subsequently he secured preferment of various sorts, including the rectory of Geddington, Northamptonshire, where there was a favourite royal residence (*C.P.R.*, 1232-47, pp. 355, 356, 371, 372, 377, 379, 385, 397, 407, 475, 489). Bradley had a prebend in St. Martin's, London, and built himself a house at Wilton (*C.P.R.*, 1247-58, p. 327, *C.R.*, 1247-51, p. 25). Penne was to have a benefice worth thirty or forty marks (*C.P.R.*, 1247-58, p. 241).

<sup>3</sup> *C.R.*, 1237-42, p. 163.

<sup>4</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1232-47, p. 436. On his name and origin, see above, i. 254, n. 7.

<sup>5</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1247-58, p. 558.

<sup>6</sup> Who was assigned £40 Tournois yearly out of the farm of Bordeaux as equivalent to £10 sterling annually due to him at the exchequer (*C.P.R.*,



Gaddesden in 1240-42, and the counter-roll throughout Penne's keepership was kept by the queen's chaplain, Alexander of Bradeham. Perhaps it was this preoccupation which led to his failure to render proper account of the queen's chapel, relics, and so forth, during the latter period.<sup>1</sup> The fact that the accounts enrolled at the exchequer mention various *rotuli de particulis* which might seem to require the services of several clerks becomes less significant when we notice that in 1252-53, which is the only period for which a group of such rolls has survived, nearly all were the work of Robert de Chaury, by whose "testimony and counter-roll" the queen's accounts were then being presented.<sup>2</sup> The fact that in April 1243 the archbishop of York was asked to provide for "Robert, clerk of the queen's wardrobe" a church worth thirty marks, suggests that there was at any rate one clerk whose salary was comparable in size with that of the keeper or his colleague who kept the counter-roll, but the date makes it likely that the man in question was Robert of Chaury, and that this fee was due because in the absence of Lapalud he was practically doing the keeper's work.<sup>3</sup> With such uncertainties, and in the absence of any detailed lists of liveries or wages, it is impossible to come to any decision as to the size of Queen Eleanor's wardrobe staff.

With the death of Henry III. a fresh chapter opens in the history of the queen's household. In the first place, whereas Henry had been spared complications by the fact that his mother took a second husband, in France, before he was himself of an age to marry, Edward I. was faced, like his son and grandson, with responsibility for two royal ladies, each with the title of

1232-47, pp. 306, 320, 321). Peter, the queen's doctor, was presented to the church of Chipping in 1240, but resigned it in 1241 (*ib.* 239, 265), probably because meanwhile he had been given a prebend in the chapel of St. Clement in Pontefract Castle (*ib.* 243, 258, 291, 329).

<sup>1</sup> The latest account notes: "*Compotus debetur de ornamentis capelle de predicto tempore et duobus aliis temporibus*" (Pipe, No. 116, m. 1d).

<sup>2</sup> They are *E.A.* 349/8, *de secretis donis regine*; 349/10, *de fructibus et electuariis*; 349/17, *de oblacionibus regine*; 349/24, *de oblacionibus regine et elemosina per viam*. Others, such as 349/23, may be his work also. As each, however, is headed "*Rotulus Roberti de Chaury contra Walterum de Bradele*," possibly this is the counter-roll itself, made in sections instead of as a single document.

<sup>3</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1232-47, p. 373. Cf. *C.R.*, 1242-47, p. 506. It is unlikely that he was that Robert of Linton who was among the queen's clerks in 1239, and who in Dr. Tout's view is identical with a clerk of the king's tailor in 1254 (see above, iv. 357, 366-367).

queen, though distinguished from each other as *regina mater* and *regina consors*. In the second place, Edward's policy, as Dr. Tout has shown,<sup>1</sup> was to treat "the wardrobes of the subordinate members of the royal house as subordinate to his own." The result was that the line between the staff and activities of the wardrobes of king and queen became blurred, that both persons and money were transferred from one to the other, and that the operations of the wardrobe of Eleanor of Castile left fewer traces for the future historian than that of Eleanor of Provence. There has not survived a single complete original account of her officials, showing both receipt and particularised expenditure, so that we have to piece together information from the summary enrolled at the exchequer after her death,<sup>2</sup> such accounts of her officials as remain,<sup>3</sup> her correspondence, and allusions in the king's records.

The second Eleanor's wardrobe was organised on lines similar to that of the first. At its head was a keeper, assisted by a colleague to whom the title of controller was now given,<sup>4</sup> and under their orders was a subordinate staff, central and local. As a whole Eleanor's officers seem to have attained a degree of unpopularity greater than is explicable by the dislike naturally excited by their duties of exaction and collection. Archbishop Pecham said that her clerks were "of the stock of the devil rather than of Christ," and after the queen's death, when a special commission of inquiry invited complaints against her ministers, some very strange tales were told.<sup>5</sup>

The first keeper of whom we hear is Mr. Geoffrey of Asphale, to whom in August 1280 a charter was handed to be placed in the

<sup>1</sup> See above, ii. 42.

<sup>2</sup> *Pipe*, No. 143, m. 36.

<sup>3</sup> The most substantial is the *Liber domini Johannis de Berewyk de expensis in garderoba regine* in the British Museum (*Add. MS.* 35294). Its first entry is 30th September 1289, its last concern the queen's death in November 1290. In the Record Office are a summary but useful account of payments made on Eleanor's behalf from 14 to 18 Edward I. (*E.A.* 352/7); accounts of expenses (*ib.* 352/11, 13, the latter printed in part in *Archives de la Gironde*, lxvi. 1-13); and an account of repairs in the queen's chamber at Westminster (*ib.* 467/20). A few hints can also be got from the accounts of Eleanor's executors (*E.A.* 352/27, 353/1, 9, 19). Transcripts of these were printed by B. Botfield, *Manners and Household Expenses*, pp. 95-139 (Roxburghe Club, 1841).

<sup>4</sup> The account for 1288-89 was presented "by the view and testimony of Richard of Bures, controller" (*Pipe*, No. 143, m. 36).

<sup>5</sup> See below, p. 271.

queen's treasury,<sup>1</sup> but who was quite as active, both before and after that date, in the service of the king as in that of the queen.<sup>2</sup> The preferments showered upon Geoffrey in reward were, in the view of his former fellow-student Archbishop Pecham, scandalously numerous. When the archbishop visited the diocese of Lichfield in 1280, he cited Geoffrey, with six other canons, for non-attendance, though he afterwards accepted the king's excuses on his behalf.<sup>3</sup> The following year Edward told the bishop of Chichester "not to compel Mr. Geoffrey of Asphale, king's clerk, who is beneficed in the bishop's diocese and is continually engaged in the king's affairs, to take orders or make personal residence," because "the king's clerks ought not to be compelled to do these things whilst engaged in the king's service."<sup>4</sup> In 1286, however, Pecham addressed to Geoffrey a letter which is worth quoting in full,<sup>5</sup> as corrective to the impression, easily conveyed by the numerous dispensations to pluralist and non-resident clerks in the service of great people which crowd the papal registers, that the church viewed with indifference this use of clerical preferment as a mere substitute for salary. "With the utmost possible affection," writes Pecham, "we beg you that if you have a dispensation for holding as many benefices as you do, you send a copy of it to us, who desire, the Most High be our witness, that every honour should accrue to you that is not to the injury of your soul's health. We do not believe that you can with a clear conscience obtain so many benefices, for, so we are told, you do no good in them. Nevertheless, you continually accept others when they are offered to you. For instance, you are said recently to have accepted at the presentation of Peter of Huntingfield a fat church of his right. His intention in presenting

<sup>1</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1279-88, p. 61. He was probably, therefore, in office a year earlier than is stated above, ii. 42, n. 2.

<sup>2</sup> In May 1275 he was one of two auditors appointed to hear a case between the citizens of York and the abbot of St. Mary's; in October of the same year he supervised the collectors of the fifteenth in Essex and Hertfordshire; next year he was adjudicating in a dispute between the sailors of Yarmouth and Bayonne; in 1279 and 1286 he went overseas with the king (*C.C.R.*, 1272-79, p. 250; *C.P.R.*, 1272-81, pp. 119-120, 236, 316: *ib.* 1281-92, pp. 224, 233, 268).

<sup>3</sup> *Registrum (R.S.)* iii. 1064. Besides this canonry at Lichfield, Geoffrey had a prebend in the king's free chapel of Wolverhampton, had been arch-deacon of Dublin since 1278, and in 1281 was made warden of St. Leonard's hospital at York (*C.P.R.*, 1272-81, pp. 279, 443, 469).

<sup>4</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1279-88, p. 129.

<sup>5</sup> *Registrum*, iii. 937.



you to such is clear, since a short time ago he was turned out of various posts in the king's service." How far Geoffrey responded to this appeal we do not know. The following year he died,<sup>1</sup> and was succeeded by his colleague John of Berwick, who for two years already had been keeper of the queen's gold.<sup>2</sup> For Berwick, however, even more than for his predecessor, work undertaken for the queen represented only a small element in a career crowded with administrative activities of all sorts, and his name bulks large in royal records up to the time of his death in the reign of Edward II.<sup>3</sup>

Of Richard de Bures, the controller, we know little.<sup>4</sup> The men of whom we hear most are those responsible for getting in the revenues which supported the household, and especially conspicuous among these were the queen's clerks Walter of Kent and Hugh of Cressingham, who acted in succession as stewards of her lands. Walter, who closed an energetic career before 1286,<sup>5</sup> figured prominently among the accused in the subsequent inquiry into the conduct of the queen's ministers, and even his former colleagues found little to say in his defence.<sup>6</sup> Hugh, on whose greed and pomposity the chroniclers dilated while they poked fun at his physical unwieldiness,<sup>7</sup> reached the height of his

<sup>1</sup> The writ of aid to his executors is dated July 5, 1287 (*C.P.R.*, 1281-92, p. 276). In 1279 he had granted his lands in Denham, West Suffolk, and Brent Elcigh, near Lavenham, to the abbey of St. Osyth, in exchange for £40 a year (*C.P.R.*, 1272-81, p. 408; *ib.* 1281-92, pp. 34, 189; *C.C.R.*, 1279-88, p. 460).

<sup>2</sup> *I.e.* of the additional payment due to the queen when a voluntary fine was made to the king. See below, p. 264.

<sup>3</sup> In July 1312 he held lands in Essex, Wiltshire, Hampshire, Norfolk, and Surrey (*Cal. Inquis.* V. pp. 218-220). Cf. *C.C.R.*, 1307-13, pp. 481, 483, 485, 486).

<sup>4</sup> On one occasion the chancery referred to him as receiver (*C.C.R.*, 1279-88, p. 61).

<sup>5</sup> In 1273 he was described as "steward of the king and of Eleanor his consort" (*C.P.R.*, 1272-81, p. 8) and in 1279 as "clerk of the king's consort" (*C.C.R.*, 1279-88, p. 2). From 1276 to 1280 he was collector of the queen's gold (above, ii. 42, n. 2). He often acted on commissions of oyer and terminer.

<sup>6</sup> In a case about goods maliciously detained, "no objection was made by the bailiffs of the lady queen, nor anything alleged on behalf of the said Walter, not even by John de Ponte his executor there present," while the jurors say "that they understood that those goods came to the hands of the said Walter, not to the profit of the lady queen." In another case the jurors, "asked to whose hands the aforesaid money came, said to the hands and convenience of the said Walter" (*Assize Roll*, No. 1014, ms. 7d 11d).

<sup>7</sup> *Hemingburgh* (Eng. Hist. Soc.) ii. 127, 139, 140.

fortunes when in 1296 he was made treasurer of Scotland, only to come to a violent end at the battle of Stirling Bridge the following year.<sup>1</sup>

One new feature makes its appearance with Eleanor of Castile—a queen's exchequer, to which her bailiffs were bidden to account. I have not traced any of its records, but various sums in the wardrobe accounts were spent upon it. John of Berwick, between 1286 and 1289, paid out £10 a year as fees to "clerks remaining at the queen's exchequer throughout the year," and 2s. to its ushers, and also purchased parchment, bags, baskets, chests, and an exchequer board covered with say.<sup>2</sup> After Eleanor's death her executors made payments to "Hugh once usher of the Queen's exchequer, for taking summonses and writs to various places," and paid a bill for "canvas for the windows of the queen's exchequer at Westminster."<sup>3</sup>

The household of Edward's second wife, Margaret of France, was arranged *mutatis mutandis* on lines corresponding with that of the first, and no doubt even its personnel was to some extent the same.<sup>4</sup> Its chief official was usually described as treasurer, sometimes as keeper. William of Chesoy, who held this office during the first year after Margaret's marriage,<sup>5</sup> went overseas in 1300,<sup>6</sup> and was succeeded by the John of Godley whom on departure he appointed as his attorney,<sup>7</sup> and who had been for years a clerk of the king's. The only controller, specifically so called, of whom we hear is John of Courtenay, who went to Paris on the queen's business in 1302–1303,<sup>8</sup> and whose account of moneys

<sup>1</sup> See his life in *D.N.B.* Barneton in the diocese of Ely, Ufford in Northamptonshire, and Kingsclere in Hampshire, may be added to the churches there named to which he was presented (*C.P.R.*, 1281–92, pp. 297, 432, 475). Another fact not there mentioned is the discovery after his death that he was illegitimate (*Cal. Inquis.* III. pp. 267–268).

<sup>2</sup> *E.A.* 352/7.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* 353/19.

<sup>4</sup> For example, among the persons accompanying Margaret overseas in December 1307 was Humphrey of Walden, whose name had long been familiar as a bailiff of Queen Eleanor and an active royal agent (*C.P.R.*, 1307–13, p. 25).

<sup>5</sup> His salary was 2s. 6d. a day. We have his account as presented to the king's wardrobe in 1301 (*E.A.* 357/5, m. 1).

<sup>6</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1292–1301, p. 515.

<sup>7</sup> The latest mention of John with the title of queen's treasurer that I have noticed is in April 1308 (*C.C.R.*, 1307–13, p. 31), but as late as 1314 he was among those appointed to try trespasses of vert and venison in forests held by the queen (*C.P.R.*, 1313–17, p. 152).

<sup>8</sup> *E.A.* 361/3, m. 3.

paid to him by the keeper of the king's wardrobe is still extant.<sup>1</sup> Next to the keeper, the cofferer seems to have been the most active of Margaret's staff. William of Melton held that post for at least the first twelve months of the household's existence,<sup>2</sup> but was then transferred to the service of the king's eldest son, Edward of Carnarvon, to which he remained attached. His successor, Thomas of Quarle, remained in office till 1307, possibly later.<sup>3</sup> The only other members of Margaret's staff who need be mentioned are her two successive stewards John Hastang<sup>4</sup> and John Abel, of whom the first leaves a lighter impression upon history than the second, whose name is conspicuous during the early years of Edward II.<sup>5</sup>

One of Margaret's accounts, in a terrible state of decay,<sup>6</sup> contains in its legible portion details which suggest that the separate exchequer was still maintained. I am inclined to think that it may actually have occupied the same room as the king's exchequer, or at any rate was closely adjoining. Entries made to the ushers of the exchequer for wax for writs, and to the ushers of the receipt for tallies, probably relate to her husband's office, not her own,<sup>7</sup> but others relate specifically to her accountants and accounts. Two exchequer boards, the making of which occupied joiners and carpenters for a week,<sup>8</sup> were to be used "the one for the receipt of moneys and the other for hearing the accounts of the ministers of the same queen." The cost is recorded of parchment for her rolls, writs, summons and accounts, of sacks to put her money in, of locks for "a certain coffer at the New

<sup>1</sup> *E.A.* 367/11.

<sup>2</sup> He appears as Chesoy's colleague in the account presented for 1299-1300 (*L.Q.G.* pp. 357-358) and in a list of names in *E.A.* 358/18.

<sup>3</sup> Accounts of his survive in *E.A.* 359/7, 360/21, 361/3, 9. He accounted at the king's wardrobe in 2 Edward II. (*ib.* 373/25) and in 7 Edward II. was still complaining that the auditors had treated him badly. Some of the details are vividly personal. For example, when he stated that, whereas he sold a charger named Cardinal for £20 only, the auditors had burdened him with another 70 marks beyond that price, Walter Langton and Aymer de Valence, who were present, "and who knew that charger well," declared that Cardinal was worth fully 100 marks (*ib.* 361/9).

<sup>4</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1301-1307, p. 460.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. e.g. *C.C.R.*, 1307-13, pp. 12, 24, and *C.P.R.*, 1307-13, pp. 26, 52.

<sup>6</sup> *E.A.* 366/25.

<sup>7</sup> At any rate in Philippa's time such payments to the king's exchequer formed a regular feature of her receiver's accounts (*ib.*).

<sup>8</sup> A schedule sewn to the side contains the detailed bill, amounting in all to £4 : 10 : 3½, sent in by John Dymmoc, who made them.



Temple in which to put the queen's treasure," of the mending of a balance, and of knives for cutting tallies. Some of the difficulties in the way of the queen when bringing her ministers to account are suggested by the fact that when three messengers had already been sent with her letters bidding three of her bailiffs to come to render account, these had to be followed by others to the same "to levy money," and these again by others "to hasten the money."

A new chapter opens with Isabella of France, the wife of Edward II.<sup>1</sup>, who during the half century of her married life (1308-58) experienced astonishing changes of fortune. Her normal position as queen consort altered suddenly for the worse in the autumn of 1324, when her lands and castles were resumed into the king's hands on the pretext of public danger. An interval of intrigue followed, resulting finally in the deposition of her husband and the accession of her son. For the next three and a half years, from March 1327 to October 1330, she enjoyed as queen mother unprecedented wealth and authority, only to disappear again into obscurity when the young Edward asserted himself and turned upon the Mortimer faction.

During the earliest of these periods (1308-24), two magnificent complete account books<sup>2</sup> and various subsidiary documents<sup>3</sup> reveal to us an organisation similar in outline to its predecessors, but at a riper stage of development. The wardrobe, with its keeper or treasurer, its cofferer and at least eight other clerks, shoulders the main burden of the household's work. The establishment in its upper ranks alone, ladies, knights, clerks and squires, numbers at least seventy, while the attendant throng of watchmen, laundresses, messengers, servants, carters, grooms and pages brings up the total to about 180. Among the ladies-in-waiting, by the way, there already figured in 1311-12 Eleanor, the wife of the younger Hugh Despenser,<sup>4</sup> so that the assertion

<sup>1</sup> For details as to her household and that of Philippa I owe much to an unpublished M.A. thesis written by my pupil Miss A. M. Best on "The financing and organisation of the household of the queens of England during the first part of the fourteenth century." The lapse of time has placed at my disposal more material than was accessible to Miss Best, but her careful work has helped me greatly.

<sup>2</sup> One, for 1311-12, is in the British Museum (*Cotton MS. Nero C viii. ff. 121-153*); the other, for 1313-14, is in the Public Record Office (*E.A. 375/9*).

<sup>3</sup> Such as *E.A. 376/20, 377/11*.

<sup>4</sup> Special arrangements had to be made for her baggage in October 1311, "because the lord Hugh le Despenser her husband stole away from her her

in the Lanercost chronicle that her intimacy was forced upon the queen by Despenser tyranny in 1322 is as untrustworthy as several other statements there made in the same connection.<sup>1</sup> Of Isabella's officials little need be said in detail, for they do not stand out for better or worse among other "civil servants" of the day. Dr. Tout has already noted that William of Boudon, who was keeper of her wardrobe from 1308 to at least 1316,<sup>2</sup> had gained his first experience in the household of her husband before he became king.<sup>3</sup> It may be added that the same is true of Sir William Inge, conspicuous among her knights,<sup>4</sup> and that even the apothecary, Peter of Montpellier, had been at work in Edward's household as early as 1303.<sup>5</sup> It was natural that to begin with men of experience should be transferred from other posts, but that as time went on promotion should occur within the household. Thus when Henry of Hale, the queen's cofferer till December 19, 1315, left to take the same post in the king's household, he was succeeded by a clerk who had previously been assisting Boudon, Thomas of Weston; and when Boudon himself gave up the post of treasurer, Hale came back to occupy it.<sup>6</sup> It is worth noticing that whereas in the king's household at this period the steward was always a layman, in the queen's the knight Ebulo de Montibus was in February 1314 succeeded by a clerk, John Fillol.<sup>7</sup>

Isabella's accounts are the first to illustrate abundantly in the queen's household the activities of those sub-departments, the great and the privy wardrobe, whose parallels in the king's household had been developing since at least 1253.<sup>8</sup> The great wardrobe, whose special concern was the purchase, storage and

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sumpter-horses and other carriage necessary for her at Eltham" (*Cotton MS. Nero C. viii. f. 137d*).

<sup>1</sup> *Chron. de Lanercost*, p. 254.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Pipe*, No. 168 m. 50, and *I.R.* 126, m. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Above, ii. 225. Boudon was in Edward of Carnarvon's service as early as 1300-1301 (*E.A.* 360/17).

<sup>4</sup> In 1313 Inge was one of those who "at the king's bidding" went with Isabella to France, though others of her *entourage* remained in England (*ib.* 375/9, f. 25). Ten years before he had been doing business for Edward, prince of Wales (*ib.* 363/18, ff. 5, 7d) and in 1305 Edward, describing him as "our dear bachelor" begged the king not to remove him to become a justice in Scotland (*Exch. Misc.* 5/2. Cf. my *Letters of Edward, Prince of Wales, in 1304-1305*, soon to be published by the Roxburghe Club).

<sup>5</sup> *E.A.* 363/18, m. 4d.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.* 376/7, f. 27; *C.C.R.*, 1313-18, p. 548; *C.P.R.*, 1317-21, p. 130.

<sup>7</sup> *E.A.* 375/9, f. 26.

<sup>8</sup> See above, iv. ch. xiv.

distribution of such non-perishable articles as cloth, furs, wax, dried fruit and spices, was still in close connection with the wardrobe, on whose clerks it relied for the accounting involved in its business. Thus in the wardrobe book for 1313-14, for example, John Fleet and John de Foresta are described in one place as cofferer and controller of the wardrobe, and in another as cofferer and controller of the great wardrobe.<sup>1</sup> The *parva garderoba*, or *garderoba robarum*, as it is often called,<sup>2</sup> had also made its appearance, and was marked by that special connection with the chamber which Dr. Tout has noted in the case of the king's privy wardrobe.<sup>3</sup> The differentiation of function between the two comes out clearly when we examine the cost of their carriage as they travelled. The great wardrobe, linked to the chandlery and the chapel by their common need of wax, often shared transport with them. In 1315-16, for example,<sup>4</sup> three carts, each drawn by three horses, were usually allotted to these three departments, though sometimes more were needed. The total cost of carriage for the year was £9 : 2 : 2, whereas the privy wardrobe in the same period had spent £18 : 19 : 5, using far larger numbers of carts. Between Rockingham and Huntingdon, for example, a two days' journey, the privy wardrobe had four carts, each drawn by four horses, and six with three each. The year before, when the queen, with the countess of Warenne and several other great ladies, had made a twelve days' expedition from London to Appledore in Kent and back, its baggage had filled no less than twenty carts with three horses each, and twenty-eight with two.<sup>5</sup> This is not surprising, for the luggage it carried included not only bedding and the like, but also buckets for almsgiving and the queen's bath-tubs.<sup>6</sup> When, in 1325, Isabella went to France, considerable stores of wax, parchment, linen and such things had to be taken overseas. Their distribution between September 29 and November 15 is recorded in a beautifully kept "roll of the spicery of the household of the lady queen."<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *E.A.* 375/9, ff. 16d, 29. On this John Fleet and his namesakes, see above, iv. 445-446.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* 375/19, ms. 1, 3.

<sup>3</sup> See above, iv. ch. xv.

<sup>4</sup> *E.A.* 376/20.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* 375/19, m. 4.

<sup>6</sup> *Cuve pro balneis regine* (*ib.* 376/20). If, like the king's privy wardrobe, it was responsible for buying fruit, we may credit it with the purchase in 1314 of apples "to feed a certain porcupine given to the queen" (*ib.* 375/9, f. 24).

<sup>7</sup> *Ib.* 381/17.



The need of some central storehouse for these departments had begun to be felt in the case of the queen just as in that of the king. In a turret of the Tower there was one such, in charge of the queen's tailor, John of Falaise, who from time to time received safe-conducts to go about the country buying on her behalf, and who, in 1313-14, was allotted 12d. a day whether at court or not.<sup>1</sup> On his death in 1315 Thomas of Weston was sent hurriedly from Wye in Kent to seal both the door of the turret and John's coffers inside.<sup>2</sup> As at the same time one of the queen's serjeants-at-arms took up his abode in the earl marshal's house at Broken Wharf "to keep the wardrobe of the king and queen after the death of John of Falaise,"<sup>3</sup> there may have been a second storehouse in Queenhithe ward. John of Falaise was succeeded by Stephen of Falaise, whose work in 1315-16 is reflected in the queen's records,<sup>4</sup> and to whom letters patent empowering him to buy on the queen's behalf were issued as late as September 1317.<sup>5</sup>

I have seen no reference in the accounts of this period of Isabella's life to the doings of her exchequer.

The next two periods in Isabella's career, from September 1324 to March 1327, and from that date to October 1330, are both abnormal, the former because the queen was under suspicion, the latter because she was fresh from a great triumph. The revolution of 1326-27 may be said to have been on the horizon from the moment when, in 1324, the queen's lands were taken into the king's hands on pretext of "the unsettled and threatening condition of the times."<sup>6</sup> Such action was not, of course, unprecedented in feudal conditions when war was expected,<sup>7</sup> and perfectly adequate arrangements were made for Isabella's living and other expenses,<sup>8</sup> so that her resentment may have been due rather to her own

<sup>1</sup> *E.A.* 375/9, f. 16. This was an advance on his earlier allowance of 7½d. (*Nero C.* viii. f. 132). For examples of safe-conducts, see *C.P.R.*, 1307-13, p. 450; *ib.* 1313-17, pp. 110, 284-285.

<sup>2</sup> *E.A.* 375/19, m. 4.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* m. 5. The allusions in this account enable us to antedate by a reign the statement made above, iv. 412, as to the settlement in London of other wardrobes besides the king's.

<sup>4</sup> *E.A.* 376/20, m. 3d.

<sup>5</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1317-21, p. 21.

<sup>6</sup> *C.F.R.*, 1319-27, pp. 302, 308; *C.C.R.*, 1323-27, p. 260.

<sup>7</sup> In the autumn of 1317, when civil war seemed imminent, Margaret the queen mother had surrendered, at the request of Edward II., the castles of Berkhamstead, Odiham, Leeds, and Gloucester (*C.P.R.*, 1317-21, pp. 38, 46).

<sup>8</sup> See below, p. 274.

guilty conscience than to any justification in the actual facts. Most of the chroniclers, unaware, of course, of these financial readjustments, took for granted that the seizure must lead to her impoverishment, and several state that it was accompanied by a reduction in her household which deprived her of her accustomed officials and companions. Geoffrey le Baker, indeed, paints her as furious at becoming "a mere servant, the paid handmaid of the Despensers."<sup>1</sup> That some change of personnel did occur is probable, for on February 5, 1325, shortly before Isabella crossed the Channel, Henry of Eastry, prior of Christchurch, Canterbury, urged Archbishop Reynolds to see to it that before the queen reached France she should regain "her wonted train and household of both sexes."<sup>2</sup> Apparently he succeeded, for the records show that Isabella's entourage on this visit was actually more impressive in size than on the two previous occasions on which she had accompanied her husband on a visit to France,<sup>3</sup> though not so large as when she went alone in February 1314.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, the list of protections issued in February 1325<sup>5</sup> and the accounts kept in France between that date and the following November<sup>6</sup> show that many well-tried friends were in her service. Thomas of London, the "clerk assigned by King Edward . . . to deal with the expenses of Isabella queen of England, recently sent to the parts of France," as the description runs in the controller's account, may well have been the same man who had been beyond

<sup>1</sup> *Chron. Galf. le Baker*, p. 17. Cf. *Chron. Edw. I. and II.* (R.S.) i. 307, ii. 279; *Ann. Osney* (*Ann. Mon.* iv. R.S.), p. 346; *Chron. de Lanercost* (Maitland Club), p. 254.

<sup>2</sup> *Lit. Cantuarienses* (R.S.) i. 137. Isabella left her huntsmen and hounds at the priory, where they consumed a quarter of wheat a week, and became, after prolonged stay, most unwelcome guests (*ib.* pp. 168-170).

<sup>3</sup> Protections were issued to 33 persons going with her in May 1313, and to 30 in June 1320 (*C.P.R.*, 1307-13, pp. 580-81; *ib.* 1317-21, pp. 447, 453).

<sup>4</sup> Fifty-three protections were then issued (*ib.* 1313-17, pp. 85-86).

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* 1324-27, pp. 91-92, 100, 106.

<sup>6</sup> We have Boudon's original counter-roll as sent by him to the exchequer on Nov. 11, 3 Edw. III., covering the period March 9 to Sept. 29, 1325 (*E.A.* 380/10). Thomas of London's roll, of which this is a duplicate, exists only in a contemporary transcript, to which is attached a second portion carrying on the account to Nov. 14 (*ib.* 380/9). The Rev. Joseph Hunter analysed the first section in *Archaeologia*, xxxvi. 242-257. There exist also the rolls of the spicery and of the pantry and buttery from Sept. 29 to Nov. 15. (*ib.* 381/17, 18), and the counter-roll of *necessaria* for the same period (*ib.* 381/7). A little account, undated in the official list, containing expenses of kitchen, scullery, saucery, hall and chamber, relates to the same time (*ib.* 382/18).

seas in Isabella's service five years before,<sup>1</sup> and his controller was her former treasurer, William of Boudon. Robert of Stanton, now steward, had been to France with her already in 1320.<sup>2</sup> William of Norwell had, in 1311-12, been clerk of her kitchen before in 1312-13 he took the same post in the king's household.<sup>3</sup> John of Oxendon, who by November had become keeper,<sup>4</sup> had not hitherto figured largely in her records, but he had been in her train as early as 1320,<sup>5</sup> and had received preferment at her request in 1315.<sup>6</sup> On the whole, therefore, it seems as if Edward had not yet shown openly in this connection the suspicion which undoubtedly he had already conceived. Our accounts stop in November 1325, just before both sides put their cards on the table, Edward by a peremptory summons to his wife to return, Isabella by refusal and defiance. Between that point and her invasion of England in September 1326, she presumably relied on the hospitality of foreign friends. Even after she had landed in this country again, conditions were, of course, for a time abnormal. She and her son were pooling resources, expenses and staff, and utilising the services of deserters from her husband's side. One such was Robert of Wodehouse, since 1323 keeper of Edward II.'s wardrobe. In these revolutionary months Wodehouse was described indifferently as keeper of the wardrobe of the queen or keeper of that of the king's son,<sup>7</sup> till, when the young Edward gained the crown, the old title of keeper of the king's wardrobe could again be used. In the latter capacity, Wodehouse dealt in his first roll of account with the whole period from November 1326 to January 1328, but explained that the early part related to "the expenses of the household of the lord king and of the lady queen Isabella his mother conjointly . . . from the first day of November in the twentieth year of king Edward, son of king

<sup>1</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1317-21, p. 41. He was then parson of Barton Seagrave, Northamptonshire.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* p. 453.

<sup>3</sup> *Cotton MS. Nero C. viii. f. 125* See above, iv. 80-81.

<sup>4</sup> *E.A.* 381/7, m. 3.

<sup>5</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1317-21, p. 453.

<sup>6</sup> He was presented to the church of Overstone, Northamptonshire (*ib.* 1313-17, p. 338). He made some curious exchanges with Boudon as to the church of Great Stanbridge, Essex. Having succeeded Boudon there in 1307, he resigned it in his favour in 1309. Boudon apparently kept it till 1328 (*ib.* 1307-13, pp. 17, 189; *Reg. Steph. Gravesend*, C. and Y. Soc. p. 288).

<sup>7</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1324-27, p. 338; *I.R.* 222. See above ii. 272.



Edward, to the eleventh day of March in the first year of the king's own reign, on which their expenses were separated." <sup>1</sup>

Now came Isabella's time of triumph. As early as January, 1327, a beginning was made with the restoration of her estates, and in February, as an expression of parliament's gratitude to her, her dower lands were almost tripled in value.<sup>2</sup> In July Edward ordered the treasurer and barons of the exchequer to compel all keepers, farmers and bailiffs of the lands and castles assigned to his mother to make their proffers at her exchequer at Westminster twice a year, "in the same way as proffers are made by the king's bailiffs at his exchequer."<sup>3</sup> Dr. Tout has already drawn attention to the fact that many of the assignments now made to the queen were made from the former "chamber estate," and that the operation of her separate exchequer kept them just as much outside ordinary exchequer control as in their former state.<sup>4</sup> The novelty of this, however, becomes less striking now that we know that both the queens of Edward I. had in the same way held their lands accountable to their own exchequer. The expansion of machinery to meet these enlarged responsibilities must have been considerable, and it is a pity that none of Isabella's wardrobe accounts for this period are available. There are, however, four memoranda rolls of the queen's exchequer,<sup>5</sup> covering the fourth to the eighth year of Edward III., that is to say, if we take it that the exchequer year is intended, the period from Michaelmas 1329 to Michaelmas 1334. They correspond closely in form and arrangement with those kept by the king's exchequer, and reflect the doings of a busy office. The first of them alone, however, belongs to the days of Isabella's greatest glories, for after her son's *coup d'état* at Nottingham she surrendered her lands to the crown in December 1330, and was for a time under some restraint.<sup>6</sup> Though soon afterwards she was assigned £3000 a year, payment to date back to the day of that surrender,

<sup>1</sup> *E.A.* 382/9. The counter-roll is *ib.* No. 10.

<sup>2</sup> They rose from an annual value of £4500 to one of £13,333 : 6 : 8. For details, see below, pp. 275-276.

<sup>3</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1327-30, p. 143.

<sup>4</sup> See above, iii. 20-21 and iv. 232-233.

<sup>5</sup> *Exch. Miscellanea* 4/30. I am grateful to Miss M. H. Mills for drawing attention to this interesting document.

<sup>6</sup> In 1332 the constable of Windsor was seeking repayment for what he had spent on her while she was in his keeping in that castle (*C.C.R.*, 1330-33, p. 434).

this was a very modest provision as compared with her recent income, and it was not till 1337 that a further grant of £1500 brought her dower to the total originally secured her by treaty.<sup>1</sup> Thenceforward till her death in 1358 we may picture her in a setting similar to that of her early married life. The idea that she spent her declining years in captivity, as mistaken tradition continues persistently to assert,<sup>2</sup> is disposed of completely by the record evidence, which includes, besides the memoranda rolls already mentioned, a file of letters, detailed accounts for the last year of her life<sup>3</sup> and numerous references in the calendars of chancery enrolments. The queen moved about the country quite as much as any lady over sixty was likely to find desirable, made long stays at Castle Rising or Hertford as inclination moved her, entertained or was entertained by many of the notables of the day and died at last surrounded by friends and solicitude.

The machinery which directed her affairs was of the usual kind. John of Oxendon seems to have continued to act as her treasurer at least as late as October 1332,<sup>4</sup> but was later succeeded by John of Newbury. Between these two the post of treasurer had been held by Richard of Ravenser, who left it to undertake the equally important office of receiver.<sup>5</sup> Whereas the treasurer's duty was ordinarily to remain in the queen's company, supervise the departments of household and wardrobe, and account in detail for income and outlay, the receiver was mainly concerned to gather in revenue, which he then disbursed at the queen's order in lump sums, paid over to her treasurer or some other authorised person. The receiver kept the household supplied; the treasurer spent, recorded and accounted for the supplies. It is interesting to find this system, which became common in the subordinate royal and baronial households of the time, in operation in the case of Isabella.<sup>6</sup> The chief remaining officials of the household were the steward, Sir John atte Lee, and the cofferer, Nicholas of

<sup>1</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1334-38, p. 489. See below, pp. 276-277.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Observer*, Dec. 29, 1929.

<sup>3</sup> One copy, among the Cotton MSS. in the British Museum (*Galba E iv.*), was analysed by Mr. E. A. Bond in *Archaeologia*, xxxv. 453-469. The counter-roll of receipt is in the Record Office (*E.A.* 393/5).

<sup>4</sup> *Exch. Misc.* 4/30, m. 8.

<sup>5</sup> *E.A.* 393/5, f. 1. Some of the stages of Ravenser's lucrative and conspicuous career as a civil servant are recorded in his life in *D.N.B.*

<sup>6</sup> See above, iv. 260-261.

Louth, while locally the two stewards north and south of Trent presumably ranked next to the receiver.<sup>1</sup> Lee and Ravenser were both transferred when the queen mother died to the service of the queen consort, and afterwards to that of the king.<sup>2</sup>

Isabella died on August 22, 1358, but it was not till November that she was buried in the Franciscan church at London, or till December that her household was dispersed. Ravenser, Lee and Louth took an inventory of her possessions, collected her debts, and made ready for the final account, which was presented before the king's auditors in January and early February, 1359. An interesting little book preserved among exchequer accounts has details so vivid that one can almost see the officials at work.<sup>3</sup> One by one they list the dead woman's garments, among them that mantle of red samite lined with yellow silk which she had worn at her wedding, and in which her corpse is now to be wrapped. Then they enumerate her books, many of them romances, some of the Charlemagne cycle, some of the Trojan war, a few belonging to the Arthurian group. Then there were her books of devotion, her gradual of the French use, bound in white leather, her ordinal of the use of Paris, her book of homilies in French. Some of these went to her daughter the queen of Scotland, but most were delivered with due formality into the king's keeping. So, too, were all her charters and memoranda, packed in a chest under the seal of the treasurer and chamberlains of the exchequer, eleven papal bulls, charters relating to Ponthieu, seals of Ponthieu in sealed pouches, charters of liberties. And from these the clerks passed on to matters of less administrative interest, plate and jewels, horses and carriages, and so on. As Edward had by letters patent placed the issues of Isabella's lands at the disposal

<sup>1</sup> When in London or elsewhere on the queen's business, Lee and Newbury received an allowance of 6s. 8d. a day, whereas Louth drew 3s. 4d. only (*Galba E* xiv. ff. 38d, 41d). Ravenser's annual fee was 100 marks, while the chief steward of the queen's lands got £50 (*ib.* ff. 54, 55d). I have not noticed any mention of a controller. Richard of Marketon, John Norwych, and Thomas of Hertfordyngbury are described as *subclerici garderobe et contrarotulat.* (*ib.* f. 38d), which may mean that the work of keeping duplicate rolls was divided among several persons.

<sup>2</sup> See above, iii. 234, 259; iv. 149.

<sup>3</sup> *E.A.* 393/4. There are also very full details concerning this period in the sections devoted to *necessaria* and *dona* in *Galba E* xiv.



of her executors for three years after her death,<sup>1</sup> the winding up of her affairs continued to occupy Ravenser even after he had entered Philippa's service.<sup>2</sup>

Queen Philippa's household, at the time when Ravenser entered it, had already been in existence for nearly thirty years. We still possess many of its records. One of the most interesting is a register preserved among the Miscellanea of the Chancery,<sup>3</sup> containing copies of the indentures made between the queen's officials and those to whom her lands were let at farm, or of the letters by which she appointed stewards, bailiffs, attorneys and others, or ratified action of her agents or of her predecessors, or wrote to this or that bishop with regard to churches in her presentation. It may have been this very register, or one similar, to which the queen's receiver was referring in his account for 1336-37 when he noted a purchase of parchment to be used for a "register of commissions made to various farmers and bailiffs of the queen."<sup>4</sup> Many receivers' accounts are extant, notably a set belonging to John of Eston's term of office, which stretch almost, though not quite continuously, from Easter 1336 to October 1348.<sup>5</sup> Three documents of 1352 and 1353 concern the account rendered by John Molyns, the queen's steward south of Trent.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The original letters were among the documents now handed over (*E.A.* 393/4, f. 8d).

<sup>2</sup> His accounts may be seen in *E.A.* 393/7, 394/10, 395/5, 397/1, 7, 13, 18. Cf. also *E.A.* 333/29, 30, 334/1, 509/3.

<sup>3</sup> *C.M.* 9/58. I must thank Mrs. M. Sharp for kindly calling my attention to this. In its present form it consists of fifteen membranes stitched together at the head and written on both sides. Its earliest entry is dated 1330, its latest 1336. Notes such as "*Respice in rotulo sequenti*" (m. 1) and descriptive headings such as "*Registrum de tempore Willelmi de Colby*" (m. 3d) seem to hint at a series originally arranged in chronological order, but the document as it stands seems to be grouped by subject rather than by date, and is incomplete. Membranes 1 and 1d are occupied entirely by indentures; membrane 2 begins in the middle of an entry; membranes 3 and 3d are filled entirely with letters of appointment; the remaining membranes are mainly occupied by miscellaneous letters patent and close, but occasionally contain groups of the documents relevant to a particular transaction, such as that by which Sir John Darcy granted to Queen Isabella the manor of Wark in Tynedale (m. 12d).

<sup>4</sup> *E.A.* 387/22, m. 4.

<sup>5</sup> Documents of identical character have in the course of time come to be divided between the categories of *Exchequer Accounts*, *Various*, and *Ministers' Accounts*. Eston's returns with regard to lands assigned to the household are in *E.A.* 387/22, 388/7, 389/1, 2; *M.A.* 1091/5, 8, 10 and 11, while those relating to lands assigned to the chamber are in *E.A.* 387/23 and *M.A.* 1091/3, 4, 9. See below, p. 255.

<sup>6</sup> *E.A.* 392/6; *M.A.* 1091/12, 13.

There are also several fine specimens of the household's central records. For the earliest stages we have treasurer Colby's account from April 12, 1330, to October 20, 1331,<sup>1</sup> and can supply the deficiencies due to its fragmentary condition from an enrolment made when it was presented at the exchequer,<sup>2</sup> and also from the duplicate of its later portion contained in the book of Colby's controller, John of Amwell.<sup>3</sup> There is another controller's book for 1349-50,<sup>4</sup> and a cofferer's account for 1357-58.<sup>5</sup>

Philippa's household, as an independent organisation, lasted only till February 1363, when the increasing weight of her debts and difficulties induced the king to take over her responsibilities.<sup>6</sup> During that time, it evolved some new experiments of its own, though in general structure it resembled Isabella's. Here, too, the common bond of service to one mistress united a set of agencies and officials whose main concern was with local affairs with another more directly attached to the queen's person. To the first belonged bailiffs and reeves, farmers of castles, forests or manors, the two stewards north and south of Trent, and a receiver or receivers, the head, for a time at any rate, being a general receiver who formed the chief link with the central organisation. The second was officered by a group at the head of which stood the treasurer and the steward of the household, with controller and cofferer. Three financial offices existed, the wardrobe, chamber, and exchequer.

These two groups were at no time mutually exclusive, and were drawn into a much closer unity as time went on. Throughout, the general direction of the queen's affairs was in the hands of her advisory council, which makes frequent appearance in the records, and concerned itself quite as much with the minutiae of local business as with central problems. When Hugh of Glanville, chief auditor of the queen's accounts, went to take seisin of her estates, to appoint bailiffs and reeves, and in fact to superintend her possessions throughout England, his business was "enjoined upon him by the queen and her council."<sup>7</sup> Local

<sup>1</sup> *E.A.* 385/5.

<sup>2</sup> *Enr. Accts. (W. and H.)*, 2/10.

<sup>3</sup> *Rylands Latin MS.* 235.

<sup>4</sup> *Misc. Books of Exch. T.R.*, 205.

<sup>5</sup> *Rylands Latin MS.* 236.

<sup>6</sup> See above, iii. 59, and below, pp. 279, 280.

<sup>7</sup> *Latin MS.* 235, f. 14d. On the legal status of the queen's council, see Ehrlich, *Proceedings against the Crown* (Oxford Studies in Social and Legal History, vol. vi.), App. III.

independence might seem to be emphasised when Philippa's steward of lands could affix his own seal "in the name of the lady queen" to an indenture letting Bristol at farm to its mayor and commune for ten years, but careful note was made that the arrangement would become permanent only if she and her council so decided.<sup>1</sup> This council, of course, would include the queen's central officials, but could move about as required. We can see it at work on one occasion, "sitting in the exchequer of the same queen," and allotting payments, among them a half mark to be given to the ushers of the king's exchequer of account "over and above their *certus*, of courtesy, by the consent of the whole council."<sup>2</sup> In all sorts of other ways the parts were made to feel their oneness with the whole. The central secretariat, for example, must draft and seal the letters patent which officials would produce as warrant for their actions, and from the same source must come authorisation in matters affecting even the humblest of Philippa's dependents. So it was, for example, when "Geoffrey, son of William Lovekyn, our *nayf* of Stratfield Mortimer," obtained licence to proceed to holy orders despite his villein status "without challenge or impediment from us or our ministers."<sup>3</sup> Officers were transferred constantly from the one type of work to the other. John of Eston, who had been cofferer in 1330-31, became receiver in 1336;<sup>4</sup> John of Amwell was first controller of the household and afterwards collector of queen's gold;<sup>5</sup> John of Gatesden, in Ireland, combined the office of superior steward of the queen's lands in Ulster and Connaught with that of controller of her chancellor and treasurer there.<sup>6</sup>

The most striking development came, however, when the two chief clerical offices, that of receiver general and treasurer, were combined in the hands of the same man. An enrolment of receipts given by John Cook, in 1354, describes him as "treasurer and receiver of the moneys of queen Philippa,"<sup>7</sup> and the cofferer's account for 1357-58 includes among its disbursements £100 for Cook's fee as "treasurer and receiver of the queen's money in her exchequer at London."<sup>8</sup> Although these are the only two

<sup>1</sup> *Chanc. Misc.* 9/58, m. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *M.A.* 1091/9, m. 7.

<sup>3</sup> *Chanc. Misc.* 9/58, m. 7.

<sup>4</sup> *Latin MS.* 235, f. 14d and *M.A.* 1091/1, m. 1.

<sup>5</sup> *Chanc. Misc.* 9/58, m. 5.

<sup>6</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1350-54, p. 442.

<sup>7</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1354-60, p. 80.

<sup>8</sup> *Latin MS.* 236, f. 7d.



examples that I have noticed of the use of the double title, and Cook is often described merely as treasurer, there is no sign of any contemporary appointment of a general receiver, and Cook's own recorded activities are of a kind connected with a receiver's position. Possibly we may connect the new arrangement with the fact that in 1354 an attempt seems to have been made to take stock of the queen's affairs. Cook, the two stewards of her lands and two auditors of her accounts were empowered in October of that year "to receive fines from those who wish to make fines for any cause whereof they are impeached by the roll of accounts or by the scrutiny lately made by Sir John Molyns and Richard de Cressville, clerk, or by the sessions of the justices or stewards of the queen, of the whole time of the queen before the present date."<sup>1</sup> As far as we can see, the arrangement persisted. When Cook had died in the spring of 1358,<sup>2</sup> William of Cheston was mentioned in May as receiver of the queen's exchequer,<sup>3</sup> but as soon as possible after the death of the queen-mother in the following August, the valuable services of Richard of Ravenser were secured for the queen consort. On June 20, 1359, the king confirmed Philippa's appointment of Ravenser as "receiver of the issues of her lands, rents and profits," with power to act as her attorney in any court in England.<sup>4</sup> From that point up to and beyond the amalgamation of her household with the king's, the records describe him indifferently as the queen's treasurer or receiver. Presumably from 1363 onwards his main energies were directed to the getting in of revenue, so as to make the stipulated contribution to the queen's chamber and the joint household, while the rest went towards the clearance of the queen's long-standing debts. His account for 1364-65<sup>5</sup> is in form very similar to those which John of Eston had been accustomed to present when receiver.

One result of the absorption of the treasurer in work of this kind was the delegation to a colleague of the minutiae of wardrobe administration. This colleague was not, as one might perhaps expect, the controller, but the cofferer, who seems to have been rising steadily in importance during the reign. There are various

<sup>1</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1354-58, p. 141.

<sup>2</sup> *C. Pap. Reg. Let.*, 1342-62, p. 591.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* p. 231.

<sup>3</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1358-61, p. 42.

<sup>5</sup> *M.A.* 1092/3.

indications of this. One is given by his status with regard to liveries. In 1340-41 there were four chief categories of these, valued respectively at 53s. 4d., 40s., 26s. 8d., and 20s., and whereas the treasurer, chamberlain, steward of lands and steward of the household received that "robe of four pieces" which belonged to the first class, both cofferer and controller were in the third.<sup>1</sup> By 1344-45, however, the cofferer had moved up to the second category.<sup>2</sup> More substantial than such evidence is the growing practice of delegating to the cofferer work which in the past the treasurer would have done himself. The receiver in 1341-42 speaks of the cofferer as *oneratus per ipsam reginam in capite de expensis hospicii sui faciendis*,<sup>3</sup> and in the following year notes after the total of his receipts, "*Et non plus, quia maior pars recepte terrarum citra Trentam fit in garderoba regine per Rogerum de Clonne . . . coffrarium eiusdem.*"<sup>4</sup> A similar witness to the cofferer's responsibilities comes in the days when Roger himself had moved up to the treasurership.<sup>5</sup> The latest cofferer's book we have gives an interesting guide to precedence in the household of his time in the shape of a list of fees.<sup>6</sup> Cook, under the double title already mentioned, gets £100; next ranks the steward of the queen's lands with £66 : 13 : 4. Presumably this was the steward north of Trent, who in 1349-50 had received that sum while his colleague south of Trent had only £40.<sup>7</sup> The steward of the household and one auditor of accounts have £20 annually, while another auditor, the clerk and maker of writs in the queen's exchequer and the queen's attorney in the king's exchequer have only £10 a year each. Next come a clerk of pleas in the king's exchequer and clerks deputed to make writs for the queen in the king's chancery, each with a yearly fee of £2. Three *servientes ad placita regine* are assigned respectively £2, £4, and £2 : 13 : 4 annually, while the *clericus extractarum forinsecarum* in the king's exchequer draws £1 a year.

The idea of unification and centralisation was, of course, much in the air about this time.<sup>8</sup> We can see it at work in another connection in Philippa's case at an earlier date. After a pre-

<sup>1</sup> *E.A.* 389/5, f. 1d.

<sup>2</sup> *M.A.* 1091/5, m. 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Rylands Latin MS.* 236, f. 7d.

<sup>4</sup> *Misc. Books of Exch. T.R.* 205.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* 390/8, f. 2d.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.* 1091/8.

<sup>7</sup> *Ib.* ff. 7d, 8.

<sup>8</sup> See above, iii. 194-198.

liminary period, in which there were interim arrangements because Isabella the queen-mother was still in possession of so much, Philippa seems to have gone on to a serious consideration of her estates. In November 1331, *pur ascuns certaines enchesons*, known to her but not to us, she removed all her receivers and other accounting officers, and appointed commissioners north and south of Trent to make an inquiry and fresh appointments.<sup>1</sup> Whereas at first she had usually a receiver south of Trent, another north of Trent, and another for queen's gold, amobrages and the like, in 1336 she appointed John of Eston to exercise for life these three functions in his single person.<sup>2</sup> His magnificent series of accounts deserve far more minute study than I have been able to give them. One set dealt with the issues from dower lands assigned to the expenses of the queen's household, the other to revenues assigned to the chamber. These last included the issues of specified lands, the income from queen's gold and amobrages, and grants from the king's exchequer. Before Eston handed in his receipt he deducted certain fees, including his own and that of the queen's general attorney, and paid certain expenses. These last illustrate and make vivid the process of administration in many different ways. They include the payment of farms and rents due to others from the queen's lands, wages paid to the keeper of her stud, or constables, janitors and watchmen in her castles, purchase of parchment to be used partly for "writs, rolls, and other memoranda," but partly for "a register of the commissions made to various farmers and bailiffs of the queen,"<sup>3</sup> payments to messengers taking to the queen's wardrobe rolls with the names of debtors, at the bidding of her council,<sup>4</sup> and references to the exchange of English money into foreign for the queen's use abroad.<sup>5</sup> The set relating to the chamber contains details more personal in the shape of prebends, special alms, and the like, authorised by letters under the queen's privy or secret seal, to recipients of the most varied kind, nuns, chaplains, the queen's illuminator, fiddler and midwife. The expense was divided between household and chamber revenues in varying proportion. Eston, for example, generally drew half of his fee of £20 from each, but when, in 1342, the clerks writing writs and memoranda in the

<sup>1</sup> *Chanc. Misc.* 9/58, m. 4d.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* m. 12.

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 250.

<sup>4</sup> *E.A.* 388/7, m. 5.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* 389/1, m. 2.



queen's exchequer were to receive the £10 a year due to them for the whole time during which he had held office, one-third of the total due was paid from the household revenues and two-thirds from those assigned to the chamber.<sup>1</sup>

It is possible that the triple combination of offices assigned to Eston for life in 1336 in actual fact dissolved again into its component parts before his death. The last account we have of his for chamber revenues is for 1342-43,<sup>2</sup> though, as he is described in a list of liveries for 1344-45 as receiver of queen's gold,<sup>3</sup> which belonged to that category, we should assume that he was still acting then. The same list speaks of Robert of Imworth as "receiver of the queen" without further particularisation, but as late as 1347-48 we have an account of Eston's relating to revenues assigned to the household.<sup>4</sup> As in November 1359 the prebend of Clifton, Lincoln, which he had received in 1350, was given to William Retford, I judge that Eston died that year, though as this and four other prebends were to go to Retford "by exchange or otherwise" the evidence is not conclusive.<sup>5</sup>

Philippa's administrative personnel calls for no special comment. Her first treasurer, William of Colby, had been controller of Edward II.'s chamber in 1323-24.<sup>6</sup> Already by 1329 Philippa was besieging the pope with requests for his preferment, and in 1330 the pope recommended him for "any dignity short of the archiepiscopal."<sup>7</sup> He ceased to be treasurer in October 1331,<sup>8</sup> and in 1332-33 was acting as clerk of the queen's privy seal.<sup>9</sup> In 1333 he became dean of York, but was dead before 1336.<sup>10</sup> William of Kirkby was described in Colby's account as treasurer "immediately after" himself,<sup>11</sup> but by 1332-33 had been replaced by William of Culpho,<sup>12</sup> a pluralist who had been dispensed for illegitimacy in 1327,<sup>13</sup> and had been overseas in the king's service

<sup>1</sup> *M.A.* 1091/5. We may infer that there was no invariable rule, for the auditors were expressly directed to this effect by writ.

<sup>2</sup> *M.A.* 1091/9.

<sup>3</sup> *E.A.* 390/8.

<sup>4</sup> *M.A.* 1091/11.

<sup>5</sup> *C. Pap. Reg. Let.*, 1342-1419, pp. 199, 313.

<sup>6</sup> See above ii. 345.

<sup>7</sup> *C. Pap. Reg. Let.*, 1305-42, pp. 292, 349.

<sup>8</sup> *Enr. Accts. (W. and H.)* 2/10.

<sup>9</sup> *Cotton MS. Galba E iii.* f. 184d.

<sup>10</sup> *C. Pap. Reg. Let.*, 1305-42, p. 394; Le Neve, *Fasti*.

<sup>11</sup> *Rylands Latin MS.* 235, f. 5d.

<sup>12</sup> *Galba E iii.* ff. 174-192d.

<sup>13</sup> *C. Pap. Reg. Let.*, 1305-42, p. 264. Cf. *ib.* 1342-62, pp. 59, 70.

in January 1331.<sup>1</sup> He became warden of the hospital of St. Catherine by the Tower in 1334,<sup>2</sup> though another nominee of Philippa's there, William of Kilsby, was to have a far more memorable association with it.<sup>3</sup> Culpho was still acting as Philippa's treasurer in the spring of 1336, but later in the year was succeeded by William of Kirkby,<sup>4</sup> who this time stayed in office till January 1345.<sup>5</sup> The importance of his services to king and queen is evidenced by an order to the chancellor in 1338 to present him to "the first vacant prebend or dignity in the king's gift which he will accept."<sup>6</sup> Roger of Clonne, who had been cofferer while Kirkby was treasurer,<sup>7</sup> probably stepped into his shoes at once. At any rate, he was in office by 1347-48,<sup>8</sup> and a steward's roll extending from Michaelmas 1351 to Martinmas 1353 describes him still as treasurer, though it also mentions his successor John Cook.<sup>9</sup> Of Cook, who had been keeper of the king's great wardrobe from 1345 to 1349,<sup>10</sup> we have already spoken. In the race for preferment his greatest prize was the treasurership of St. Paul's, which he vacated by death in 1358, the latest year in which he appears in Philippa's accounts.<sup>11</sup> It is interesting to find as cofferer in Cook's last year of office a William Ferriby, one of that Yorkshire family so conspicuous in administration in the period, and connected with that Thoresby-Ravenser-Waltham group soon to send a representative to Philippa's help in the person of Richard of Ravenser.<sup>12</sup> These capable and experienced men no doubt did what they could to rescue Philippa's affairs from the chaos into which they seem by this time to have been sinking. That confusion had been due partly to circumstances, partly to maladministration, and in some cases the choice of

<sup>1</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1330-34, p. 42.

<sup>2</sup> *Chanc. Misc.* 9/58, m. 5d.

<sup>3</sup> See above, iii. 162-163.

<sup>4</sup> *E.A.* 387/22, m. 3.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* 390/8, ff. 2d and 7d, and *M.A.* 1091/10.

<sup>6</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1338-40, p. 158.

<sup>7</sup> *E.A.* 390/8.

<sup>8</sup> *M.A.* 1091/11.

<sup>9</sup> *Ib.* 1091/12.

<sup>10</sup> See above, iv. 382.

<sup>11</sup> I feel sure that the Chancery clerks made a slip in naming one Thomas Cook as Philippa's treasurer in October 1351 (*C.P.R.*, 1349-54, p. 396). For John's death, see *C. Pap. Reg. Let.*, 1342-62, p. 591, and Le Neve, *Fasti*. The John Cook to whom in 1362 an annuity of 100s. was given for his service to king and queen must be a humbler servant (*C.P.R.*, 1361-64, p. 174).

<sup>12</sup> See above, iii. 215-216 and iv. 148. Cf. also notes on this family by Miss M. V. Clarke and Mr. V. H. Galbraith in *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, xiv. 151.

helpers made seems far from wise. It seems extraordinary, for example, that in 1352, when there were many complaints about disorder on the queen's estates and conspiracies among her ministers, it should be Sir John Molyns, himself disgraced in the king's service in 1340, who was appointed steward of the queen's lands, lordships and liberties south of Trent, and set up as a commissioner of oyer and terminer to inquire into the scandals reported.<sup>1</sup> A petition to parliament in 1353 complained of his "too grievous fines and amercements,"<sup>2</sup> and in 1357 he was disgraced again, this time for life. No other official of Philippa's has a reputation so unsavoury.

We must not leave Philippa's affairs without noticing the light thrown by her records upon the history of the queen's wardrobe of La Réole in Vintry Ward in the city of London, which began when in December 1330 the king granted her his houses there for this purpose.<sup>3</sup> In 1333, when masons and carpenters and others were hard at work preparing the buildings for their new uses, the accounts state explicitly that these houses were situated in the parish of St. Thomas the Apostle, and on that ground a mark was contributed on the queen's behalf to work in progress on the bell-tower of the church.<sup>4</sup> A certain Maria of Beauvais, apparently now dispossessed, since the queen's council ordered a house to be hired for her near by, may have been a descendant of that Simon of Beauvais, surgeon to Edward I., whose land and tenements on this site had been similarly described.<sup>5</sup> By October 1333 both the great wardrobe and the privy wardrobe had moved in, the former from quarters in "Servet's Tower," Bucklersbury,<sup>6</sup> the latter from a house rented for its accommodation in Milk Street.<sup>7</sup> A good deal of alteration and addition took place during the next twenty or thirty years, as we know from the frequent transport of building material thither, while a receiver's account for 1339

<sup>1</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1350-54, p. 287.

<sup>2</sup> *Rot. Parl.* ii. 253. See above, iv. 296.

<sup>3</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1330-34, p. 37.

<sup>4</sup> *Galba E.* iii. f. 178.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* iii. f. 179.

<sup>6</sup> In 1317 queen Isabella had been granted for life the house in London formerly belonging to William Servat, and held by the king of the gift of Antonio di Passano (*C.P.R.*, 1317-21, p. 53). In 1330-31 wages were paid to John of Newentone, *clerico custodienti magnam garderobam domine regine apud turrin Servet' London'* (*Latin MS.* 234, f. 6d). Mr. Kingsford has collected various fourteenth-century references to this tower in his edition of Stow's *Survey*, ii. 329.

<sup>7</sup> *Galba E.* iii. f. 177d.



shows the wardrobe bearing one half and the chamber the other of the expense of work on the great chamber there, "which was for the most part pulled down by order of the queen's council, and rebuilt."<sup>1</sup> Mention in a grant of 1363 of "the street of La Ryole in the parish of St. Michael Paternosterchurche" shows that already by that date the name, if not the structure, had extended into the parish with which by Stow's time it had come to be associated.<sup>2</sup> Much of the space must have been occupied by the storehouses and other rooms required by the great and privy wardrobes and their staff, among whom Thomas of Tetbury, clerk of the great wardrobe,<sup>3</sup> and William of London, the queen's tailor, were conspicuous. It is quite clear, however, that general wardrobe business was transacted there. The treasurer had his own chamber and his own stable,<sup>4</sup> quittances given by the cofferer to the receiver were dated there,<sup>5</sup> and a rent due to the queen was described as payable either at her exchequer or at her "wardrobe of La Ryole, London."<sup>6</sup> Two months after Philippa's death, in 1369, Edward assigned these buildings to the dean and canons of his chapel of St. Stephen at Westminster, who were glad enough to let them to the next queen when required.<sup>7</sup>

The death of Philippa brings to an end the most interesting chapter in the history of the queen's household during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. For thirteen years there was neither queen consort nor queen mother. After that, though Richard II. was twice married, neither Anne of Bohemia, queen for twelve years only (1382-94), nor Isabella II. of France, whose husband's deposition took place before she had quite completed her third year of married life (1396-99), were on the stage long enough to surround themselves with persons or institutions likely to impress historical memory as deeply as those connected with Isabella I. or Philippa. Both households must be examined,

<sup>1</sup> *M.A.* 1091/3.

<sup>2</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1361-64, p. 281. Cf. Stow, *Survey*, i. 244, quoted above, iv. 412.

<sup>3</sup> In 1330-31 he was described thus (*Lat. MS.* 234), in 1357-58 as "clerk, buyer, and provider" (*Latin MS.* 236). He was acting as late as July 1361 (*C.P.R.*, 1361-64, p. 41).

<sup>4</sup> *Galba E.* iii. f. 178.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, *M.A.* 1091/5.

<sup>6</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1367-70, p. 464.

<sup>7</sup> *Ib.* p. 311. He rented for his own great wardrobe from the canons his inn in Lombard Street which he had given them when the college was founded (see above, iv. 404).

however, to make our tale complete, and both will be found to be arranged on lines already familiar.

In the case of Anne of Bohemia, it is a curious fact that direct material, in the shape of original documents shaped by her own officials, is almost completely lacking during her lifetime. Exceptions exist in the shape of a few letters,<sup>1</sup> an indenture or two,<sup>2</sup> and some accounts of the hundred of Macclesfield,<sup>3</sup> but it is not till she is dead that we get a list of members of her household, compiled because they are to receive gifts in memory of their good service,<sup>4</sup> and a number of accounts presented by receivers and bailiffs who, though appointed by Anne herself, did not make their returns till they were called upon by those placed in charge of her lands after her death.<sup>5</sup> Thanks, however, to the light which these shed on earlier conditions, and also to many references in patent, close and fine rolls, it is not difficult to reconstruct in outline her administrative machinery.

At the centre, of course, stands the queen herself with her court about her, ladies, knights, squires, clerks, pages, grooms and servants, generally in residence with the king but sometimes alone.<sup>6</sup> Of most of her household we know little, though here and there a name makes its impression for some special reason. So it is, for example, in the case of her knight Ralph Stafford, murdered by her husband's half-brother, Sir John Holland;<sup>7</sup> or of her lady-in-waiting, Agnes of Lancecrona, whose abduction by the duke of Ireland caused a public scandal;<sup>8</sup> or of Brother Nicholas Hornyk, her confessor, to whom in 1385 was committed the keeping of the alien priory of Montacute, Somerset, and who secured it again in 1386, "for past and future good service," although in the interval its prior had sought and obtained the custody for himself in accordance with the provision that the heads of alien houses should normally be preferred to others in

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.* *E.A.* 510/29.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* 403/3.

<sup>3</sup> *M.A.* 804/12.

<sup>4</sup> *K.R. Misc. Accts.* 663. I am indebted to Miss M. H. Mills for this reference.

<sup>5</sup> *M.A.* 1203/3, 1242/13, 1092/4.

<sup>6</sup> In July 1382 the king granted her his prises on wine coming to the ports of Bristol and Southampton "in aid of her household expenses while she keeps house when not in his company" (*C.P.R.*, 1381-85, p. 157).

<sup>7</sup> See above, iii. 395, and the life of Ralph's father and namesake in the *D.N.B.*

<sup>8</sup> See above, iii. 424.

this capacity.<sup>1</sup> Hornyk may have been one of those Bohemians whose presence in the queen's train provoked so much criticism. The most important officials were Sir Richard Abberbury, the queen's chamberlain, and Thomas More, her treasurer and receiver-general. Abberbury is presumably the same man who had inherited the manor of Donnington in Berkshire before 1353, founded or refounded a hospital there in 1394, and sold the manor to Thomas Chaucer in 1415.<sup>2</sup> Dr. Tout identifies him as the first *magister* of Richard, who became a knight of the king's chamber on the accession of Richard II., and who was expelled from court by the Merciless Parliament in 1388.<sup>3</sup> Within four months of the king's marriage he was acting as attorney for the queen,<sup>4</sup> though the first mention I have noticed of him under the title of chamberlain does not come till 1382.<sup>5</sup> Thereafter till 1386 he was constantly busied in the queen's affairs, while as late as 1393 an annuity to her master of the horse was granted by the advice of "Richard Abberbury, knight, and others of her council."<sup>6</sup> After her death Richard Abberbury was one of the two knights appointed with clerical colleagues to audit the accounts of Thomas More as to the collection of moneys owed to the queen.<sup>7</sup> It looks, therefore, as if his connection with the queen survived his removal from the king's service.<sup>8</sup>

Thomas More may not have been in office from the outset, since in June 1382 Hugh of Cottingham was described as "treasurer and secretary of the queen,"<sup>9</sup> whereas Thomas in July of the same year, when engaged in an inquiry on Anne's behalf as to the value of a manor assigned to her in dower, was called merely "clerk."<sup>10</sup> However, by 1385 he had become receiver-general,<sup>11</sup> and either under that title or as treasurer, or on one occasion under a composite description as *thesaurarius*

<sup>1</sup> *C.F.R.*, 1383-91, pp. 108, 127, 130. Hornyk's duties as confessor seem hardly compatible with the assurance now given by four mainpernors in Chancery that he would "stay continually upon the priory and its possessions."

<sup>2</sup> *V.C.H. Berkshire*, iv. 91, 93-94, 96.

<sup>3</sup> See above, iii. 330-331, iv. 341, 344.

<sup>4</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1381-85, p. 54.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.*, 1391-96, p. 488.

<sup>5</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1381-85, p. 263.

<sup>7</sup> *Ib.*, 1396-99, p. 245.

<sup>8</sup> I do not feel quite certain, however, that all these references are to the same person. The licence for the crenellation of Donnington Castle given in 1386 to Richard of Abberbury "the elder," shows that a namesake was alive at that date (*Ib.*, 1385-89, p. 156).

<sup>9</sup> *Ib.*, 1381-85, p. 132.

<sup>10</sup> *Ib.* p. 196.

<sup>11</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1385-89, p. 99.



*sive receptor generalis*,<sup>1</sup> continued to act during Anne's lifetime, while after her death until 1399 he still held office as receiver-general in the lands that had been hers.<sup>2</sup> His fee was £50 a year, with 5s. daily allowance for expenses.

A number of references indicate the activities of the queen's council, though no members are mentioned by name except Sir Richard Abberbury and Sir Thomas Percy, the latter being awarded in 1394 a grant for life of fifty marks a year "for good service to the late queen, of whose council he was retained."<sup>3</sup> In 1385, in connection with a recognisance of Philip Darcy for £4000 to be levied in Lincolnshire, there was a memorandum of defeasance, on condition that Philip should abide the award of the queen and her council as to trespasses committed by him against her tenants in that county, and, if found guilty, cause the seven men impeached for that trespass to come before the queen's council at Westminster or London in the quindene of Hilary, and submit themselves wholly.<sup>4</sup> There is an interesting glimpse in 1390 of the queen's council referring to the king's their doubts as to Anne's legal position with regard to pensions and annuities secured upon her dower lands. When the recipients died, could she take the sums herself? After petition to the king in council it was granted that in such cases she should retain them.<sup>5</sup>

The administration of Anne's lands was carried on in the usual way, bailiffs and local receivers acting under the supervision of the receiver-general. The queen's exchequer continued to function, as may be seen in an order given in 1388<sup>6</sup> to Henry Fitzhugh, lessee of Anne's castles of Richmond and Bowes and her manors in Richmondshire, to pay his yearly rent of 650 marks "at the queen's exchequer in London." The queen's wardrobe was again in occupation of the buildings at La Réole, for which

<sup>1</sup> This is in an indenture with the head of the queen's great wardrobe (*E.A.* 403/3).

<sup>2</sup> For a year after Anne's death, the revenues of her dower lands were reserved for the payment of her debts; then Thomas, archbishop of York, John, bishop of Salisbury, and Edward, earl of Rutland, were enfeoffed, and renewed More's appointment (*C.P.R.*, 1391-96, pp. 447, 578; *ib.*, 1396-99, p. 245). More was succeeded in March 1399 by Roger Westwode (*C.F.R.*, 1391-99, p. 292).

<sup>3</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1391-96, p. 480.

<sup>4</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1385-89, p. 99.

<sup>5</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1388-92, p. 207.

<sup>6</sup> *Inspeximus* and confirmation were enrolled in 1391 (*ib.* p. 393).

an annual rent of £20 was paid to the college of St. Stephen's,<sup>1</sup> and Anne herself and other members of the royal family were in residence there from time to time.<sup>2</sup> One of the most interesting surviving documents is an indenture between More, the queen's treasurer, and John Neuthorp, her *garderobarius*, in which the latter's annual fee is named as £20, and payments are made at various times for various purposes, including the tailor's wages and the purchases made by the *garderobarius* "as is contained in his book concerning the office of the aforesaid wardrobe."<sup>3</sup>

All we have seen of Anne's household suggests that its personnel was in close sympathy with the curialist party about the king himself, and that, in consequence, even the graciousness and personal charm of the queen could not save it from unpopularity. We have seen that her chamberlain, Abberbury, was among those attacked by the Merciless Parliament. Burley, the king's vice-chamberlain, a more conspicuous victim, had escorted Anne to England, remained her intimate, and was said to have encouraged her to keep about her those Bohemian friends on whose dismissal parliament afterwards insisted.<sup>4</sup>

Anne died in 1394,<sup>5</sup> and all the extravagance of Richard's grief did not prevent him from soon taking steps to secure a second queen in a quarter likely to give him help against his domestic enemies.<sup>6</sup> The pledge of that alliance was the child Isabella, whom he brought back as his wife from France in the autumn of 1396, and who in January 1397 was crowned queen. Between that point and Richard's fall, the "household of the queen consort" leaves its impress on the records, but was, as one might expect, a more obscure and dependent establishment than would have surrounded a queen of full age. Master Richard Courcy, "the queen's secretary," received a fee of forty marks a year at the exchequer;<sup>7</sup> in March 1399 the Carmelite Thomas

<sup>1</sup> *E.A.* 510/29. This is four times the rent which the king paid to the same body in 1348 for the house in Lombard Street used for his great wardrobe till 1361 (see above, iv. 404-405).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Stow, i. 71 and 244. Letters patent of Anne's were dated there in September 1383 (*C.P.R.*, 1381-85, p. 553).

<sup>3</sup> *E.A.* 403/3.

<sup>4</sup> See above, iii. 404.

<sup>5</sup> On June 7, not, as stated by a slip above (iii. 486) on July 7. Accounts presented after her death run "usque septimum diem Junij . . . quo die dicta domina nuper regina obiit." Cf. for example, *M.A.* 1242/13.

<sup>6</sup> See above, iv. 1-5.

<sup>7</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1396-99, p. 103.

Peverell, bishop of Llandaff, was appointed her chancellor ;<sup>1</sup> Sir Hugh Despenser and Sir Philip la Vache were among the officers and servants of her household when resident at Wallingford in that year ;<sup>2</sup> the king's esquire John Walsh was appointed her attorney and clerk of her writs in the exchequer ;<sup>3</sup> and there are references to her yeoman tailor, her chief tailor, her master cordwainer, her master embroiderer, her nurse and her damsels.<sup>4</sup> A royal great wardrobe account<sup>5</sup> shows various tailors and furriers "working and labouring in the wardrobe of the lady Isabella the queen," deliveries of cloth at the king's order to John Waryn the queen's tailor for clothes for herself and her damsels, and allowances for harness delivered to Nicholas Herefeld and Thomas Adderbury, keepers of the queen's horses. The names mentioned do not suggest any preponderantly French element in the child's entourage, but the chroniclers speak of this, and state that before leaving for Ireland in 1399 Richard gave orders that the lady of Coucy, chief among Isabella's French attendants, should be dismissed.<sup>6</sup> During the remainder of her life in England, accordingly, some of which was spent in semi-captivity after her husband's fall, all her attendants were English except her confessor and one lady. After considerable hesitation Henry IV. agreed to allow her to return to France, and in July 1401 she was escorted across the Channel. Neither in political nor administrative history had she left deep impress, but rumour had it that she continued to regret her severance from England till her dying day, which came at the birth of her first child by her second marriage, a few months before her twentieth birthday.

### (C) FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND METHODS

The revenues of the queens of England during this period fall into three categories. The first is that of traditional prerogatives, the most notable being in England and Ireland, queen's gold, or an additional payment, equivalent to one-tenth of the whole, due to

<sup>1</sup> *C.P.R.*, p. 492.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* p. 588. Vache had acted as Abberbury's colleague in auditing More's accounts in 1397 (*C.P.R.*, 1396-99, p. 245).

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* p. 108.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* pp. 424, 74, 414, 153, 278.

<sup>5</sup> *E.A.* 403/5.

<sup>6</sup> See *D.N.B.* and references there quoted.



the queen whenever a voluntary fine was made with the king,<sup>1</sup> and in Wales *amobr* or *amobrage*, a sum, varying with the rank of the person concerned, exacted from a woman on her marriage.<sup>2</sup> To the second category belong estates assigned in dower, while the third includes all supplementary grants. Loans can hardly be reckoned among regular sources of income, but it is certain that every queen was obliged to borrow.

With the first category we may deal *en bloc*. Obviously, there must be fluctuations in the amount derivable from this source. Payments of queen's gold recorded in the accounts of Eleanor of Provence were trifling,<sup>3</sup> but under Eleanor of Castile, between 1286 and 1289, the income of £4875 from queen's gold was actually greater than that of £4821 from lands, while between September 1289 and November 1290 queen's gold produced £1564 out of a total of £4937.<sup>4</sup> A good example of the variation can be given from successive accounts of John of Eston, receiver of Queen Philippa.<sup>5</sup> In 1336-37, the receipts in the Easter term from queen's gold were £41 : 15 : 8, and from *amobrages* £33 : 6 : 8, while in the Michaelmas term gold brought in £112 : 14 : 4 and *amobrages* £23. In the Easter term, 1339, the only receipt in this category was £16 : 1 : 8 from queen's gold. An account covering the period from Michaelmas 1340 to Michaelmas 1341 is unusually interesting because of its detail. The *amobrages* were farmed, and brought in £66 : 13 : 4 and £20 from north and south Wales respectively. Queen's gold, entered under separate sums paid in

<sup>1</sup> The *Dialogus de Scaccario* gives a whole chapter to this subject (Book ii. ch. xxiv.). Hakewill, in 1607, presented to the queen a treatise on the history of her gold, which Prynne used and enlarged in his *Aurum Reginae* in 1668.

<sup>2</sup> See A. Jones, *Flintshire Ministers' Accounts*, pp. xviii-xx. An indirect relief to the queen's finances lay in the claim put forward by Eleanor of Provence that *ex antiqua et approbata consuetudine* every newly created queen of England had the right to nominate one nun in every religious house of women in the realm (*A.C.* xxx. 49). For similar claims on the part of the king and others, see Power, *Medieval English Nunneries*, pp. 192-194.

<sup>3</sup> For example, 4 marks from queen's gold in Ireland, received from the archdeacon of Dublin (*Pipe*, no. 83, m. 7); 8 marks from the same source another year, and 21 marks on a fine made by Aaron the Jew of London (*Pipe*, no. 85, m. 6d).

<sup>4</sup> *Pipe*, no. 143, m. 36. Details in the original accounts of John of Berwick, keeper of the queen's gold (*E.A.* 505/18). The large increase during the years in which the king was in Gascony is suspicious, and lends colour to the charges later made of oppression during his absence. In 1291 the receipts were only £231 : 18 : 10 (*ib.* 505/21).

<sup>5</sup> *E.A.* 387/23, *M.A.* 1091/3, 4, 9.

by the sheriffs of nine counties, the abbot of Cockersand, and the master of St. Leonard's hospital, York, amounted in all to only £31. This is in startling contrast with the corresponding period in 1342-43, when amobrages totalled £105 and queen's gold £669 : 11 : 5.

The collection of queen's gold raised various difficulties. In the first year in which Eleanor of Provence was queen the exchequer was accused of exacting the gold upon a fine made before her marriage.<sup>1</sup> Queens found it hard to secure recognition of their rights in this respect in Ireland. Though in 1268 letters patent of Edward I. in favour of Eleanor of Castile insisted that the claim applied to that country as well as to England,<sup>2</sup> Philippa, as late as 1360, was complaining that she could not secure her gold upon fines made in any of the king's courts there.<sup>3</sup> In 1383 a writ of aid in favour of Anne of Bohemia's attorney-general in Ireland stated that from the day of her coronation she was entitled to "one mark on every fine of ten marks made to the king, and of every greater fine in proportion, as it used to be there of old time."<sup>4</sup> Yet seven years later the royal officials in Ireland were ordered "if assured that all queens time out of mind have had by reason of their prerogative a fee called the queen's gold of certain fines made in Ireland to the use of the king's forefathers," to cause it to be levied on fines made before them, "as certain men going about to do away the custom heretofore approved are refusing to pay that fee,"<sup>5</sup> and in 1393 the order had to be repeated with the same explanation.<sup>6</sup> Anne had, in 1385, been granted amobrages throughout the principality of Wales.<sup>7</sup> There is record in 1360 of the escape of one Robert Ryng, who had been in the custody of the justiciar of Ireland for an attempt to collect queen's gold, producing as his authorisation an appointment as attorney-general under what he alleged to be Philippa's seal.<sup>8</sup>

Queen's gold was payable on none save voluntary fines, such as those paid for a pardon, or for licences of various kinds. The line was not always easy to draw, and naturally the queen's officials were anxious to draw it to her advantage. In 1336 both London

<sup>1</sup> *C.R.*, 1234-37, p. 400.

<sup>3</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1360-64, pp. 60, 61.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.*, 1389-92, p. 6.

<sup>7</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1385-89, p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1266-72, p. 199.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.*, 1381-85, p. 313.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.*, 1392-96, pp. 158, 170.

<sup>8</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1360-64, p. 77.

and Bristol were granted remission of the claim upon them for queen's gold in connection with their contributions to a tenth and a fifteenth.<sup>1</sup> Two years later an inspection of the statutes, rolls and memoranda of the exchequer was ordered, because the queen complained that "certain persons cunningly contrive to defraud her and to convert fines and obligations from which the gold ought to be paid into another nature and form, to have discharge thereof; and for this they have procured from the Chancery divers writs, wherefore the queen is often hindered from levying the gold on divers sums of money granted to the king from which it is due to her."<sup>2</sup>

The second and third sources of revenue, dower lands and supplementary grants, may best be taken together, since they were to some extent interdependent, the size of the one varying with the adequacy of the other. There was no rigid conception of the amount proper for a queen's dower, and fluctuations are noticeable when traced through the lives of seven queens.

To begin, then, with Eleanor of Provence. Twelve of her wardrobe accounts are entered on the pipe rolls, increasing in detail as the reign goes on, and forming an almost continuous series, with the exception of Lapalud's and the first of Bradley's accounts, both of which we know were presented, though they have escaped enrolment.<sup>3</sup> The earliest account, covering a period of twenty-nine

<sup>1</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1333-37, p. 689.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.*, 1337-39, p. 330.

<sup>3</sup> Lapalud's account had been "faithfully rendered" up to October 1243 (*C.P.R.*, 1232-47, p. 408) and his next account was to be audited in 1244 (*ib.* p. 436). Bradley's account for 1249-50 refers to a preceding account (*Pipe*, no. 93, m. 1). As the references printed in *P.R.O. Lists and Indexes*, no. xi. pp. 103-104, are not in every case quite exact, and do not include the number of the Pipe roll concerned, it may be useful to give the complete list here.

1. Gaddesden, Sept. 12, 1237, to Feb. 5, 1240, *Pipe*, no. 83, m. 7. Feb. 17, 1240, to April 26, 1242 (not Sept. 15, 1240, as above, i. 254, n. 4, for the Math' of the entry indicates not St. Matthew, but St. Matthias, as is shown by *C. Lib. R.*, 1226-40, p. 481) *Pipe*, no. 86, m. 6d.

2. Bradley, May 1, 1249, to June 24, 1250, *Pipe*, no. 93, m. 1; June 24, 1250, to June 24, 1252, *Pipe*, no. 95, m. 4 (not 6 as official list); June 24, 1252, to June 24, 1253, *Pipe*, no. 96, m. 18; June 24, 1253, to May 3, 1254, *Pipe*, no. 97, m. 9; May 3, 1254, to Dec. 6, 1254, *Pipe*, no. 99, m. 15 (not no. 90, as above, i. 255).

3. Aigueblanche. Dec. 6, 1254, to Nov. 11, 1255, *Pipe*, no. 99, m. 15; Oct. 28, 1256, to May 1, 1257, *Pipe*, no. 100, m. 19.

4. Penne, May 1, 1257, to Oct. 28, 1264, *Pipe*, no. 109, m. 11d; Oct. 28, 1264, to Oct. 28, 1269, *Pipe*, no. 113, m. 1; Oct. 28, 1269, to Nov. 20, 1272, *Pipe*, no. 116, m. 1d.



months, showed a receipt of nearly £1200; in the next, for twenty-six months only, this had risen to more than £1500. Bradley's first surviving account, 1249-50, recorded a receipt of £2150 in little more than one year, and though the next two years did not reach quite so high a figure, in 1252-53 he received more than £2700, and in 1253-54 more than £3500, in twelve months. In that year, however, Eleanor's fortunes reached their zenith, and a descent began. The last keeper, Penne, made his returns in blocks of as much as seven years at a time, so that it is impossible to do more than average the queen's annual income, but it was certainly well down below £2000 again,<sup>1</sup> and at the end even less, since a period of more than three years produced a receipt of little more than £2500.

The reason of this, presumably, was that although Eleanor's household was sufficiently independent to function as a separate unit, it was not self-supporting, but leaned heavily upon the king for supplements to the revenue available from the dower lands. It thus shared Henry III.'s varying fortunes, with the stringencies of what the accountants describe as "the time of the persecution of the king and queen."<sup>2</sup> Large block grants were made from the royal exchequer or wardrobe.<sup>3</sup> The queen was always remembered when the king was allotted a papal tenth,<sup>4</sup> or the revenues of a vacant bishopric fell into his hands,<sup>5</sup> or profitable

<sup>1</sup> Above, i. 255, n. 1, the total of the surplus of expenses over receipts added from two accounts, amounting to £22,329 : 0 : 10½, has been accidentally quoted as the total of receipts for 1264-69, which actually was only £7995 : 1 : 2½.

<sup>2</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1266-72, p. 91.

<sup>3</sup> Between 1257 and 1264 the queen received £2009 from the wardrobe and £3197 : 19 : 11 from the exchequer.

<sup>4</sup> Queen Eleanor was allotted £60,000 of Tours, *i.e.* about £15,000 sterling, out of the first money collected in the province of York for the papal tenth in 1267, while an order that she should have 100 marks out of the same tenth in the dioceses of Canterbury, Rochester, Chichester, Winchester, Salisbury, Exeter, Bath and Wells, Worcester and Hereford (*C.P.R.*, 1266-72, pp. 91, 174) was in 1269 so extended that she was to receive the whole tenth in the diocese of Exeter for two out of the three years in which the pope had granted it to the king (*ib.* p. 313). In Ireland, the king assigned the tenth to the pope for the arrears of yearly cess due, but the collecting clerk was able to get only 1100 marks, because pope and king had made over the tenth to Eleanor for her debts, though she was "in no small degree troubled about the collection thereof" (pp. 409, 458-459).

<sup>5</sup> £100 was paid to the queen in 1240 out of the revenues of the vacant bishopric of Winchester (*C. Lib. R.*, 1226-40, p. 491); the keeper of the archbishopric of York was told to pay out £300 for the queen's expenses in 1255

lands were available during the minority of heirs,<sup>1</sup> or he had secured a good loan.<sup>2</sup> When Peter of Savoy bequeathed the honour of Richmond to the queen his niece, and the king wished instead to give it to John of Brittany, he transferred to Eleanor in compensation the 1200 marks yearly which the king of France, by the treaty of Paris of 1259, was to pay to England until the Agenais should be given up. The result was that Eleanor became entangled in the weary negotiations which followed the death of Alphonse of Poitiers in 1272.<sup>3</sup> To the same year probably belongs an undated petition from the queen asking for wardships to the annual value of £1000 to meet the expenses of her household when not in her husband's company, exclusive of wine and cloth, which he is bound to provide; this was agreed to.<sup>4</sup>

It is clear that Eleanor's income was inadequate for her needs. She often borrowed from Italian merchants.<sup>5</sup> Though now and then, as under Gaddesden in 1242, or under Bradley in 1250 and 1253, her receipts exceeded her outlay, the balance was always swallowed up by arrears due on earlier accounts, where expenditure had outrun income in the more usual way. When Henry III. died, and "at the instance and petition of the queen," without writ or warrant from her son the new king, a view of her finances

(*C.P.R.*, 1247-58, p. 448), and the keeper of the bishopric of London 100 marks in 1267 (*ib.*, 1266-72, p. 90).

<sup>1</sup> Grants of this sort are too numerous to quote, and business concerning them bulks large in the queen's correspondence. The first substantial grant was that of the lands of Ralph of Tony in 1242 (*C.R.*, 1237-42, p. 422). She got the wardship of the lands of Margery of Redvers, countess of Devon, in 1252 (*C.P.R.*, 1247-58, p. 151), of the lands and heir of William Longsword, earl of Salisbury, in 1257 (*ib.* p. 536), and she bought, for 6000 marks, from her son Edward, the wardship of the inheritance of Robert of Ferrers, earl of Derby, in the same year (*ib.* p. 554).

<sup>2</sup> In 1267 she got £133 : 6 : 8 out of a loan of 1030 marks from the merchants of Ghent (*ib.*, 1266-72, p. 36).

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* pp. 310, 362, 383, 581; *ib.*, 1272-81, pp. 361, 385-388, 394, 429, 447. There is an interesting commentary upon the king's appointment of representatives to act with hers in 1280 in making an extent of the Agenais, in the shape of a letter explaining that her own illness since Christmas has prevented her agents from reaching Agen by Candlemas, and that the king's men must not start before their arrival (*A.C.* xxiii. 11; *C.P.R.*, 1272-81, p. 361).

<sup>4</sup> *A.C.* xvi. 207, assigned in the index to Eleanor of Castile. Cf. *C.P.R.*, 1266-72, p. 682. Questions of the queen's dower and supplements to it remained almost as prominent in Edward I.'s time as they had been in Henry III.'s. Cf. *ib.*, 1272-81, pp. 12, 27-28, 29, 71, 91, 92, 106, 142, 419, 438, and *C.C.R.*, 1288-96, p. 84.

<sup>5</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1247-58, pp. 557, 651; *ib.*, 1256-66, p. 219.

was enrolled at the exchequer, it was seen that the accumulated surplus of expenditure over revenue amounted to more than £26,000.<sup>1</sup>

The next queen consort, Eleanor of Castile, had, like her namesake and predecessor, a nucleus of dower lands supplemented by additional grants, but the nucleus was more substantial. Whereas when first dowered on her marriage with Edward, Eleanor had been promised that when she became queen lands to the value of 500 marks should be added to those worth £1000 already assigned her,<sup>2</sup> by 1280, under further pressure from Castile, Edward had increased the total in all to £4500 a year.<sup>3</sup> In 1279 Eleanor inherited from her mother the county of Ponthieu in northern France, but although her new subjects looked to her first "as first by inheritance," she and her husband were count and countess. Ponthieu was managed in much the same way as England's other French possessions, and the officials appointed to its care were not necessarily connected with the queen by previous service.<sup>4</sup> A feature which excited much criticism was the large share which Edward assigned to his wife in his exploitation of the Jews.<sup>5</sup> Archbishop Pecham, in the letter to Eleanor's treasurer Asphale, which has already been quoted in another connection, prefaced his admonitions by a request that Asphale would beg the queen to give up making usurious profits. "A rumour is waxing strong throughout the kingdom of England, and much scandal is thereby generated, because it is said that the illustrious lady queen of England, in whose service you are, is occupying many manors of nobles, lands and other possessions, and has made them her own property—lands which the Jews extorted with usury under the protection of the royal court from Christians. It is said that day by day the said lady continues to acquire plunder and the possessions of others by this means. . . . There is public outcry

<sup>1</sup> *Pipe*, no. 116, m. 1d.

<sup>2</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1247-53, p. 351.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* 1272-81, p. 380.

<sup>4</sup> When the king and queen visited Ponthieu in 1279, in the taking of the comital oath John Ferre acted as proctor for the queen and Thomas of Sandwich for the king; but it was Thomas, not John, who was made the first seneschal. His successor, Richard of Pevensey, began his career in the household of Eleanor of Provence. I have put together an outline of the county's administration from 1279 to 1307 in *E.H.R.* xxix. 435-452.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. for example, *C.C.R.*, 1272-79, pp. 140, 151, 180, 184, 192, 198, 205, 221, 297, 315, 466, 470, 501, 536, 547.



and gossip about this in every part of England. Wherefore, as gain of this sort is illicit and damnable, we beg you, and firmly command and enjoin upon you as our clerk, that when you see an opportunity, you will be pleased humbly to beseech the said lady on our behalf, that she bid her people entirely to abstain from the aforesaid practices, and restore what has been seized in this shape, or at any rate make satisfaction to those Christians who have been wickedly robbed by usury.”<sup>1</sup>

The records certainly convey the impression that everywhere the queen's officials were bent upon exacting the uttermost farthing. When in 1291 Ralph of Ivingho sat with two colleagues<sup>2</sup> “to hear and determine complaints against the ministers of Eleanor, late queen consort of England,”<sup>3</sup> it was alleged that John of Lovetot, when acting as auditor of her accounts, had in extending her manors sometimes entered rents at a higher rate than was traditional, sometimes set down as compulsory ploughings or reapings which were mere voluntary acts of neighbourliness,<sup>4</sup> while the queen's bailiffs were accused of all sorts of high-handedness and extortion.<sup>5</sup> Many of the accusations were not substantiated, but others were. It is interesting to notice also that as early as 1289 the king had ordered inquiry to be made at Haverford as to Hugh of Cressingham's interference, as steward of Eleanor, with the rights of William of Valence, Edward's

<sup>1</sup> *Registrum*, iii. 937.

<sup>2</sup> Their names, Roger Bourt and H. Husee, are given in an account of the queen's executors (*E.A.* 352/37, m. 4).

<sup>3</sup> See *Assize Rolls*, nos. 542, 836, and 1014, of which my pupil, Miss M. E. Fenwick, is making a detailed study. General conclusions will be more possible when her investigation is completed. These *auditores querelarum* held sessions at Bury St. Edmunds, Salisbury and Westminster, and although, unlike a recent commission which had dealt with scandals among the king's ministers, they were empowered to terminate the cases, in many instances their decision was that it was impossible to proceed *rege inconsulto*, or that a remedy could be sought only by the king's grace.

<sup>4</sup> *Assize Roll*, No. 1014, m. 7, “Forestarius . . . vicinus eorum et amicus specialis solebat eis pluries facere curialitates et ipsi vice rependere.” At Cawston, Norfolk, it was proved that in entering a rent of 160 hens Lovetot raised the value of each fowl from 1d. to 1½d.

<sup>5</sup> For example, a man and his wife who held tenements in Newmarket made good against the queen's reeve of Cameys Ditton a charge of coming to their house in their absence, carrying out the baby in its cradle and depositing it on the highway, taking possession for fifteen days, and then securing the imprisonment of the owners for breaking into their own house by showing a hole in the roof “through which no beast bigger than a cat or a little dog could have entered” (*Assize Roll*, no. 836, m. 5d).

uncle, and his wife Joan. Hugh, say the letters patent, has "presumed several times to neglect the king's mandates" and has behaved "in unprecedented fashion."<sup>1</sup>

The paucity of the records makes it difficult to present Eleanor of Castile's financial position in detail. Between Michaelmas 1289 and November 28, 1290, the day of her death, John of Berwick in his *Liber de expensis* put down a total of £1009 spent, as against £1001 received, as is shown by the summary on the pipe roll.<sup>2</sup> The pipe roll account, however, goes on to show that from queen's gold and the chattels of condemned Jews during the same period, and from the queen's lands between Christmas 1289 and her death, Berwick had received a total of £3898, spending against this over £4937, of which more than £200 was paid into the king's wardrobe, £50 as a fee to Mary, the queen's daughter, while the rest went in repayment of large debts, gifts and the salaries or expenses of officials. Thus while on the first account Berwick had a trifling surplus of about £8, on the second he was more than £1000 to the bad. Luckily in earlier years queen's gold had been so productive that in 1289 he had been left, at the end of three years, with a balance of over £2500, so that by careful allocations from past accounts the exchequer left him finally with more than £1700 to the good. The whole impression left is that of an important establishment with business to be conducted on a large scale.

The same may be said of the household of Edward's second wife, Margaret of France. This marriage had been one of the securities for the renewal of peaceful relations between England and France, and the treaty of Montreuil of June 1299, arranged under the supervision of Pope Boniface VIII., had included stipulations about dower. The sum there mentioned of £15,000 of Tours, four pounds of Tours being reckoned as equivalent to one pound sterling, was in Edward's actual assignment, made on September 10, 1299, raised to £18,000 of Tours, or £4500 sterling. On May 27, 1305, Edward added to this another £2000 of Tours, so that the final total reached was £5000 sterling.<sup>3</sup> By that

<sup>1</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1281-92, p. 331.

<sup>2</sup> *Add. MS.* 35294 and *Pipe*, no. 143, m. 36.

<sup>3</sup> *Foedera* (1816) ii. 972; *C.P.R.*, 1292-1301, pp. 451-453; *ib.*, 1301-1307, pp. 240-241, 368-369, 372; *C.C.R.*, 1302-1307, pp. 214, 276. The lands assigned included Cambridge castle and town, Oxford town and mills, and the hundred

time, Edward was beginning to fail in health, and so a promise was made that in case of his death the queen should not be deprived of manors given in augmentation of her dower. Besides this, there were additional grants for maintenance, especially after the birth of Margaret's two sons, with whom were brought up, as was customary, other young wards of the Crown, the most notable being Gilbert of Clare, son and heir of her stepdaughter Joan.<sup>1</sup> When king and queen were together, Edward paid for everything except the wages of her squires, but Edward's campaigning and travelling were so constant that husband and wife were often separated for the greater part of the year. Between November 3, 1299, and November 19, 1300, for example, Margaret's treasurer received sums, mainly from the king's wardrobe in fairly small instalments, amounting in all to £4772 : 5 : 5. His corresponding outlay included housekeeping expenses for the queen during three periods, covering in all about forty-one weeks, in which she was not in the king's company,<sup>2</sup> and totalled, with alms, robes, prests, wine and miscellaneous expenditure, £4439 : 2 : 2.<sup>3</sup> This is a great change from conditions in the days of Eleanor of Provence, when £1000 a year had been thought adequate allowance for the maintenance of the queen's household "in the time in which she shall not make stay with the king."<sup>4</sup>

The same treaty which in 1299 arranged the marriage of Margaret with Edward I. had secured the betrothal of his son to her niece, and in January 1308, accordingly, Edward II. married

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without the north gate, Oxford, and in 1306 Margaret's bailiffs were interpreting her rights so liberally that they tried to prevent the escheator from delivering a messuage and shops which had been bequeathed to the master and scholars of Balliol (*C.C.R.*, 1302-1307, pp. 365-366). The various subtractions, additions and exchanges during Edward I.'s lifetime can most easily be seen as detailed in an *inspeximus* and confirmation issued by Edward II. in 1310 (*C.P.R.*, 1307-13, pp. 216-219).

<sup>1</sup> *Ib.*, 1292-1301, pp. 592, 606. Gilbert's expenses are prominent in many of the queen's accounts (*e.g.* *E.A.* 361/3).

<sup>2</sup> She was with her son Edward at King's Langley from Nov. 3 to 19, 1299. Then she stayed at St. Albans, Windsor and elsewhere till April 12, 1300. Between May 5 and Sept. 17 she travelled via Stamford to Brotherton (where her son Thomas was born, and whence an escort afterwards had to accompany to Paris the midwife who had come over for the event) and on to her husband at Carlisle.

<sup>3</sup> *E.A.* 357/5, m. 1. This original account includes some outlay additional to that enrolled in *L.Q.G.* pp. 357-358, from which Dr. Tout got his total of £3667 : 9s. (above, ii. 43, n. 2).

<sup>4</sup> See above, p. 269.



Isabella of France, and thereby became responsible for a dower of £4500. During the first ten years of the reign estates were granted to the queen at intervals,<sup>1</sup> but many of the lands ordinarily used for this purpose were still in the hands of Margaret the queen mother, and the fact that in 1316 the exchequer was ordered to make annually a lump payment of 11,000 marks (£7333 : 6 : 8), minus the value of her lands in England, suggests that the first allocations were not satisfactory.<sup>2</sup> For her personal expenses she was assigned, May 14, 1308, the issues of the counties of Ponthieu and Montreuil.<sup>3</sup>

The death of Margaret in 1318 opened the way for fresh arrangements, and on March 5 Isabella's full dower of £4500 was assigned, including some of the lands she already held, but adding others just vacated. Next day Ponthieu and Montreuil were regranted, for the expenses of her chamber.<sup>4</sup> Though some changes and exchanges were made later, the total of £4500 was maintained until her lands were confiscated in 1324. Like other landowners of her day, Isabella found difficulty in collecting the full revenue which her estates nominally represented. A review taken in 1332 of arrears due shows a total accumulation of £8493 of debt to her, and indicates another of Isabella's many reasons for disliking the Despensers, since father and son left the sum of £300 annually due from them as farmers of the town and castle of Bristol and of the manor of Lechlade unpaid for five years in succession.<sup>5</sup>

It was to the Despensers, of course, that rumour ascribed Isabella's downfall in 1324. "They instigated the king to take into his hands the lands and revenues which he had previously granted to the queen, and gave her only twenty shillings a day for herself and her whole court."<sup>6</sup> As a matter of fact, Isabella was now assigned 8 marks a day for the expenses of her household and 1000 marks annually for other expenses.<sup>7</sup> To spend only a little over £37 a week on housekeeping meant considerable

<sup>1</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1307-13, pp. 11, 398; *ib.*, 1313-17, pp. 5, 38, 206, 276, 490, 639, 642, 668. Among them was the manor of Macclesfield, the possession of which involved her in 1316 in friction with her three-year-old son Edward, earl of Chester, whose justice drew the men of Macclesfield outside the manor to answer for felonies, robbing the queen and her bailiffs of cognisance (*C.C.R.*, 1313-18, p. 373).

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* 380.

<sup>3</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1307-13, p. 74.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.*, 1317-21, pp. 112, 115-116.

<sup>5</sup> *E.A.* 377/11.

<sup>6</sup> *Chron. de Lanercost*, p. 254.

<sup>7</sup> *I.R.* no. 210, m. 14.

economy according to the standards of the time,<sup>1</sup> but the allowance was at any rate far more substantial than the £7 a week of which the chroniclers talked. In any case, the restriction was either withdrawn or disregarded very soon, for Isabella's house-keeping bills during her stay in France in 1325 reached totals far higher. In the week beginning May 26, in which she made a treaty with her brother Philip IV., domestic expenses totalled more than £103, while at other times they ranged upwards from about £65. Locally, in the confiscated lands, the situation may have made little impression. Those appointed to take the estates into the king's hand were in many cases the queen's own ministers,<sup>2</sup> and whereas at first it was arranged that they should account direct to the exchequer, on October 16 there was substituted a general receiver, Robert Miles, who had been acting already for the queen in a similar capacity.<sup>3</sup> What the exchequer spent on Isabella was of course recovered from the revenues in Miles' possession.<sup>4</sup>

In any case this stage was merely temporary, and the next dramatic moment in Isabella's financial history came when in February 1327, at parliament's bidding, additional estates were assigned so as to bring up the annual value of her possessions to £13,333 : 6 : 8.<sup>5</sup> It is not surprising to find among these new assignments the castle and manor of Leeds, in Kent. These had been held by both the queens of Edward I., and their reversion had been promised to Isabella as early as 1314.<sup>6</sup> On Margaret's death, however, they were given up as part of an exchange with Bartholomew Badelesmere.<sup>7</sup> The famous incident of 1321, therefore, in which Lady Badelesmere refused Isabella a night's lodging in this very castle, must have had a special poignancy for the queen, and it is natural that Leeds should be taken into her

<sup>1</sup> In 1305, when Edward I. cut off supplies in anger from his son and namesake, the latter's most urgent economies could not reduce his domestic expenditure to less than £155 a month (*E.A.* 368/4).

<sup>2</sup> *C.F.R.*, 1319-27, pp. 300-301.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* pp. 302, 308. *M.A.* 1090/12, 1090/13.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *C.C.R.*, 1323-27, p. 260.

<sup>5</sup> *C.P.R.* The grants are analysed in Mr. S. T. Gibson's thesis on "The minority of Edward III.," and Dr. Tout has drawn attention to the chamber lands among them, which represented more than one-fifth of the new endowment (above, iv. 232, n. 1).

<sup>6</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1313-17, p. 111.

<sup>7</sup> *Ib.*, 1317-21, pp. 46, 128.

hands at the first opportunity. Other notable grants were those made in Yorkshire, including Burstwick, Knaresborough and Pontefract, worth respectively £800, £533 : 6 : 8 and £666 : 13 : 4.

Isabella's surrender of her lands in December 1330, nominally voluntary, was managed, like the previous confiscation in 1324, without serious dislocation. John Giffard and Robert of Asphale, who had been acting as her stewards north and south of Trent, were on December 9 and December 14 appointed stewards and surveyors of the surrendered lands,<sup>1</sup> and as soon as her estates were in part restored, Giffard returned to her service. It took some time to carry out the reallocation of estates equivalent to the income of £3000 now assigned to her. Hertford castle and town, with the manors of Kingscliffe in Northamptonshire and Sheen in Surrey, all three of which had first come into her hands in 1327, were the earliest to be given back, in July 1331.<sup>2</sup> A further assignment on November 15 included these and many others of the lands given her in 1327,<sup>3</sup> as well as others, such as Macclesfield, whose connection with her dated from her first years in England, and which had been held by other queens before her. Five days later the balance still due of the equivalent of £3000 was made up, again from lands previously in her possession.<sup>4</sup> This completed all that had been promised her, but in actual fact in March 1332 certain grants of advowsons, wardships and so forth in connection with the lands already given increased their value,<sup>5</sup> and in November of the same year the manors of Feckenham in Norfolk and Eltham in Kent were also bestowed on her.<sup>6</sup> The steady improvement in her position can be seen in letters patent of March 1334, which recite all the grants named above and go on to enumerate substantial additional privileges, such as that of return of writs, given in enlargement.<sup>7</sup> Ponthieu and Montreuil were restored to her in the following September.<sup>8</sup> Then the distributions stopped for a time, until

<sup>1</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1330-34, pp. 22, 23. Asphale seems not to have acted, for he surrendered his letters patent, and in January 1331 Roger of Gildesburgh, king's clerk, was appointed in his stead (*ib.* p. 47).

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.*, 1330-34, p. 153.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* p. 195. Dr. Tout notes (above, iv. 239, n. 1) that none of the former chamber manors were included in these grants.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* pp. 225-226.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* p. 271.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.* p. 367. She had held Eltham in 1311 (*ib.*, 1307-13, p. 398).

<sup>7</sup> *Ib.* p. 529-30.

<sup>8</sup> *Ib.*, 1334-38, p. 60.



in August 1337 Edward declared that "wishing to supply what is lacking of the dower assigned to her by his father," he has granted her for life £1500 yearly out of the customs of Hull, London and Boston in equal portions.<sup>1</sup>

Next to her dower lands Isabella's most substantial possession had been the counties of Ponthieu and Montreuil. The original grant of 1308, renewed ten years later, was made through the king's desire "to provide decently and honourably for our dearest consort Isabella queen of England in all expenses for her chamber, such as the jewels, gifts and other matters necessary for that same chamber."<sup>2</sup> Edward, in fact, was allotting a definite source of income, probably reckoned as equivalent to £1000 sterling,<sup>3</sup> to his wife's personal expenses, and his words must not be read, as Dr. Tout has warned us,<sup>4</sup> as implying separate cameral administration. There is no sign in Isabella's case of any inner citadel in the household corresponding to that set up in her husband's when the outer fortress of the wardrobe had been stormed. The question of Isabella's management of Ponthieu, impossible to explore here, would repay investigation. From 1309 onwards she was given the right to collate to prebends in the collegiate church of St. Wulfran at Abbeville, and thus secured a new field for the advancement of her clerks.<sup>5</sup> Her receiver's difficulties in getting in the revenues led to an investigation into the state of the county, and in February 1318, just before the regrant of the county to Isabella, Edward handed on for investigation by his council a report sent in by the council of his wife.<sup>6</sup> This showed that business in Ponthieu was almost at a standstill. The seneschal, Robert of Fiennes,<sup>7</sup> was a young man, rarely in residence, and represented when absent by a

<sup>1</sup> *C.P.R.*, p. 489.

<sup>2</sup> *Foedera* (1818), II. i. 44.

<sup>3</sup> In 1305-1306 the receipts from Ponthieu, reckoned in pounds of Paris, would at the current rate of exchange have been a little over £1300 sterling. See my article on "The County of Ponthieu, 1279-1307" in *E.H.R.* xxix. 435-452.

<sup>4</sup> See above, ii. 353.

<sup>5</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1307-13, p. 113. In 1310 she granted a house in Abbeville to John de Foresta, clerk and notary of her household and canon of St. Wulfran's (*ib.* p. 339). In 1325 her treasurer, Thomas of London, received a papal indulgence to accept a canonry at Chichester although he had a canonry at Abbeville (*C. Pap. Reg. Let.*, 1305-42, p. 244).

<sup>6</sup> *Cal. Chanc. Warrants, 1244-1326*, pp. 482-483.

<sup>7</sup> Brother to that William of Fiennes who was so prominent in the revolt of Artois against Philip V.

knight who did nothing at all. Both of them kept great state, paying for it out of the money which ought to have been going to Isabella. "Madame," says the report, was paying out large wages to advocates and councillors, few of whom did their work or even resided in Ponthieu, while bailiffs and serjeants were inexperienced and disobedient. One is forced to the conclusion that unless strong measures were taken Isabella's income from this source would fall much short of expectations. Moreover, these were years of constant friction with France, and no less than three times during her tenure of the county it was occupied by the French. It served her, however, as a refuge in 1326 when she had worn out her welcome at the French court.

We come next to the financial position of Queen Philippa of Hainault. Edward III.'s marriage with her took place on January 30, 1328, and in the following May public assurance was given to her father that within a year her dower lands should be assigned.<sup>1</sup> The position, however, was difficult, for the recent enrichment of the queen mother had appropriated a number larger than usual of the estates commonly used for such assignments. At first Philippa's household expenses were met by the king,<sup>2</sup> while in April 1329 an annual allowance of 1000 marks was set aside for the expenses of her chamber.<sup>3</sup> By February 1330 Isabella had been persuaded to surrender to her the castle, honour and borough of Pontefract, and to these were added the former Despenser lands in Glamorgan and Morgannou.<sup>4</sup> The further grant in April of Loughborough,<sup>5</sup> another Despenser manor, was considered to complete the £3000 which had been promised as dower. There remained, however, the question whether such an amount was adequate for the queen's needs, and it soon became clear that the answer was an emphatic negative. As has already been said, no solution for the problem of Philippa's independent

<sup>1</sup> *Foedera* (1821), II. ii. 743.

<sup>2</sup> In 1331 Thomas Garton, formerly keeper of the king's wardrobe, claimed allowance for money so spent up to Oct. 16, 1331 (*C.C.R.*, 1330-33, p. 383).

<sup>3</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1327-30, p. 389.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* p. 501. Eleanor Despenser had married William la Zouche of Mortimer, and to obtain a pardon for "having taken from the Tower of London certain jewels, florins and other goods of great value" (*ib.* p. 492) made fine with the king and handed over this part of her inheritance (*C.F.R.*, 1327-37, p. 161).

<sup>5</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1327-30, pp. 508, 512, 541.

maintenance was found, and in 1363 Edward in despair resumed responsibility for his wife's household expenses.

The main stages may be briefly traced. Grants began to shower upon Philippa after the downfall of Isabella and Mortimer in the autumn of 1330. In December she was assigned £1529:18:4 out of the king's moiety of papal first-fruits, and £1000 from the customs at Hull.<sup>1</sup> In January 1331 a complete reassignment of dower lands was made, intended to produce the original £3000 plus £1000 more.<sup>2</sup> Glamorgan was given up, but Philippa kept Pontefract. Of the remaining lands, many of which now passed from Isabella's keeping to hers, the most valuable were the castle, town and honour of Knaresborough (£533:6:8), the castle and town of Tickhill (£333:16:5), the castle, town and honour of High Peak (£291:13:4) and the honour of l'Aigle (£230). By February 1333, however, the Bardi were recovering a total of £2268:15s. paid at various times to the queen by the king's order,<sup>3</sup> and a few days later Edward granted her £2000 "to pay her debts."<sup>4</sup> In March, "in consideration of the fact that the lands assigned to her for life, in dower or otherwise, are not sufficient to maintain her household and for the expenses of her chamber," king and council gave another 500 marks a year, "which the queen believes will meet the deficiency," and raised this supplement in February 1334 to a total of 800 marks.<sup>5</sup> During the next twenty-five years fresh grants of one sort or another were constantly made. Among the more notable were one-third of the king's prise of wines at Hull, Southampton and Bristol, in September 1336; 2000 marks from the subsidy of one-ninth in the archdeaconry of Norfolk in 1340; the whole of the profits of the temporalities of Westminster during a vacancy in 1345; £2000 out of the customs at Hull, Boston and London, with the king's prise of wines at Southampton and London for ten years in January 1348.<sup>6</sup> Among smaller gifts, the most picturesque was that in 1347 of "the houses late of John Dayre

<sup>1</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1330-34, p. 34. The Bardi advanced £400 of it.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* pp. 55-56. Some readjustments made in the following July did not alter the total value (*ib.* p. 161).

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* p. 399.

<sup>4</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1333-37, p. 10.  
<sup>5</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1330-34, pp. 420, 512. For estates assigned as equivalent to these sums, see *ib.* p. 439 and *ib.*, 1334-38, p. 84.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.* p. 319; *ib.*, 1338-40, p. 546; *ib.*, 1343-45, pp. 432, 490; *ib.* 1345-1348, pp. 130, 449, 452.



in the town of Calais.”<sup>1</sup> If this is the Jehan d’Aire who in Froissart’s story was the second man to volunteer as one of the famous six burghers, there is a certain poetic justice in his property passing to that queen to whose intercession he and his friends owed their lives. Finally, in 1359, came another substantial additional assignment of dower lands, to the value of £2000 a year.<sup>2</sup> This, however, was the last effort to meet the queen’s wants in accustomed ways, and when it also proved inadequate, Edward charged himself with his wife’s expenses as well as his own. From the revenue derived from her dower lands £10 a day, or £3650 a year, was to be paid towards the joint outlay, and £2666 : 13 : 4 to the queen’s chamber, while what remained must be used for the next six years towards paying off her load of debt.<sup>3</sup>

The affairs of the two queens of Richard II. ran on lines too familiar to need very detailed treatment here. Anne of Bohemia’s dower was fixed at £4500. Accordingly, in May and June 1382 grants of lands, farms, wardships and assignments on customs were made in satisfaction,<sup>4</sup> while in July she was granted for life the king’s prises of wine at Bristol and Southampton for her household expenses when not in her husband’s company.<sup>5</sup> Later in the year she was given certain additional lands and castles in England and Wales,<sup>6</sup> and in November, as her council had represented to the king’s that some of the lands allotted were of less than their apparent value on account of charges upon them, grants amounting in all to more than £280 were made to supply deficiencies.<sup>7</sup> Next year it was stipulated that on all these dower lands she should enjoy the same privileges and liberties as Philippa had had.<sup>8</sup> There were readjustments at intervals, as in December 1384, when she received the forfeited county and lordship of Richmond, surrendering equivalents elsewhere,<sup>9</sup> or in December 1391, when that property was restored to John of Brittany and Anne was compensated with other lands,<sup>10</sup> or when at intervals

<sup>1</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1345-48, p. 566. She handed them over to Roger Mortimer ten years later (*ib.*, 1333-58, p. 594).

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.*, 1358-61, pp. 237-239. Some compensations and further gifts at the same time brought up the total to £2160.

<sup>4</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1381-85, pp. 117, 125-128.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.* pp. 159, 192.

<sup>8</sup> *Ib.* p. 226.

<sup>10</sup> *Ib.*, 1391-96, p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> *Foedera* (1830), III. ii. 687.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* p. 157.

<sup>7</sup> *Ib.* p. 203.

<sup>9</sup> *Ib.* p. 511.

estates were assigned to her in lieu of sums previously secured upon the customs. A grant in 1385 of the county and lordship of Merioneth seems to have been additional to her existing resources,<sup>1</sup> but when on the forfeiture of Michael de la Pole she received Lowestoft and Lothingland hundred £70 was deducted from the sum due to her on the customs at Boston.<sup>2</sup> In 1391 she received Rockingham castle with the stewardship of the forest between the bridges at Oxford and Stamford.<sup>3</sup> There are a few examples of grants of wardships and marriages made to her, but not so many as in the case of earlier queens. It is interesting to see that she was affected by the shortage of labour, and twice at least called the law to her help to compel carpenters, masons and others to work on her manors.<sup>4</sup>

Isabella II.'s dower lands were largely provided out of the possessions of the earls of Pembroke,<sup>5</sup> and in 1398 she was given the wardship of all the possessions of Roger Mortimer, earl of March, in England, Wales and Ireland, during the minority of his heir.<sup>6</sup>

What general conclusions can be drawn from this survey of the financial resources of seven queens? We have seen that £4500 was the total often regarded by the convention of the time as a suitable dower, though Isabella, in the exceptional circumstances of her triumph by revolution, soared as high as over £13,000, while in Philippa's case addition after addition to the original nucleus brought the total in the end to over £7000. Rarely if ever, it would seem, did a queen find her resources adequate to her needs. Why was this? It cannot be explained on the ground that everywhere the standard of expenditure was rising, or by the extra expense involved in constant stays abroad, because these facts were recognised and met by enlarged grants. Such, for example, was the grant of 2000 marks to Philippa in 1340 because her "charges, in her stay beyond the sea, while the king was there and after his return, were so heavy that the rent assigned for her chamber was insufficient to meet them."<sup>7</sup> Nor can it be argued that as a queen's family increased, or grants

<sup>1</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1385-89, pp. 12, 193.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* p. 413.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.*, 1396-99, p. 40.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.*, 1338-40, p. 546.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.*, 1388-92, p. 156.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.*, 1385-89, pp. 452, 524.

<sup>7</sup> *Ib.* p. 403.

of wardships brought with them young heirs to be maintained, revenue had to be stretched to meet new needs. On the contrary additional sums were allocated to fresh claims. Eleanor of Provence received grants *in auxilium sustentacionis Eadwardi lii regis*.<sup>1</sup> In 1331 the issues of the earldom of Chester were appropriated to the support of Philippa's first-born son, Edward, and by 1334 were to cover also the expenses of his baby sisters Isabella and Joan.<sup>2</sup> John of Gaunt's earldom of Richmond, granted to him in September 1342, was in November similarly put at Philippa's disposal.<sup>3</sup>

What, then, is the explanation? Partly, of course, it lies in the fact that there was often grave discrepancy between the nominal value of the queen's possessions and the amount which actually reached her coffers. Here her close connection with the king worked to her disadvantage, since men were afraid of being called upon to pay twice over. Eleanor of Provence complained that whereas one Joan Russell, tenant of the barton of Gloucester, had paid to the queen her annual rent of five shillings, the sheriff was levying from her another five shillings.<sup>4</sup> Again, when Henry III. in the last year of his life granted to Eleanor the fines from an eyre in Sussex, "the men refused to pay the said money to her bailiffs, believing that it might be exacted from them at another time by summons of the exchequer."<sup>5</sup> When sums were secured upon the customs, as in the case of Philippa, the queen was dependent not on her own but on the king's collectors, and might find them languid in her service or unable to meet her needs.<sup>6</sup> Troubles for which she was not personally responsible might react upon the queen. Thus in 1267 Eleanor of Provence had to appoint an official to collect from her estates debts and arrears owing from "the time of the disturbance in the realm,"<sup>7</sup> when her then keeper, Walter of Cokeseye, had gone over to the enemy and used her goods as his own.<sup>8</sup> Even apart from external difficulties of this

<sup>1</sup> *C.R.*, 1247-51, p. 44.

<sup>2</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1330-34, pp. 78, 523.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.*, 1340-43, p. 569.

<sup>4</sup> *A.C.* xvi. 191.

<sup>5</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1266-72, p. 632.

<sup>6</sup> Philippa was assigned £1000 out of the Hull customs in Dec. 1330; on Oct. 15, 1331, more than £60 of this was still unpaid (*C.C.R.*, 1330-33, pp. 257, 272). From 1348 onwards she was to receive £1000 a year from the customs at London, but in 1355 the collectors of the petty custom had no money left after paying her 837 marks (*ib.*, 1354-60, pp. 165-166).

<sup>7</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1266-72, p. 31.

<sup>8</sup> *A.C.* xi. 24.



sort, however, we may feel sure that the queen would find herself no better served than any other landowner of her age, though the evidence is not sufficient to suggest that her plight was unusually desperate. Eleanor of Provence, when granted a tenth of ecclesiastical benefices in Ireland, was "in no small degree troubled about the collection thereof."<sup>1</sup> The inquiry into the misdeeds of the ministers of Eleanor of Castile<sup>2</sup> showed that not only had they oppressed her tenants unduly, but that in some instances at any rate they had pocketed the proceeds. Philippa declared that by the negligence of her officials she had lost wardships and marriages in Lincolnshire.<sup>3</sup> More than one commission of *oyer and terminer* was demanded on her behalf. She had lost profits up to £200 at Stockwith because assaults on her officers there had made them afraid for a long time to hold a fair or market there ;<sup>4</sup> her parks at various places were broken, distrains rescued and ministers attacked, while "a great number of her ministers and others by conspiracy had between them" had concealed rents and taken profits for their own use ;<sup>5</sup> when her servants at Nottingham were "engaged in furthering some difficult business of the queen" some of them were seized and others imprisoned and the business remained undone ;<sup>6</sup> in the Peak district evildoers hunted in her chases, prevented her bailiffs from discharging their duties and concealed emoluments ;<sup>7</sup> while her receiver accused her bailiff in Derbyshire and Leicestershire of converting sums of money to his own use.<sup>8</sup> Instances might easily be multiplied, are characteristic of the age, and imply no unusual negligence on the part of the employer.

It must be remembered, finally, that it was common for the queen's wardrobe to make grants to the king's. Eleanor of Castile, for example, "as a gift to the king," delivered on three occasions into the royal wardrobe sums amounting in all to £2066 : 13 : 4 out of a total of £3013 : 6 : 8 which she had received from fines and the chattels of Jews between 1283 and 1289.<sup>9</sup> Isabella's accounts record a loan to her husband's wardrobe in 1313.<sup>10</sup> Dr. Tout has pointed out that as much as two-thirds of

<sup>1</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1266-72, pp. 458-459.

<sup>3</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1338-40, p. 144.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.*, 1350-54, p. 287.

<sup>7</sup> *Ib.* p. 448.

<sup>9</sup> *Pipe*, no. 143, m. 36.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 271.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.*, 1343-45, p. 164.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.*, 1354-58, p. 161.

<sup>8</sup> *Ib.*, 1358-61, p. 223.

<sup>10</sup> *Cotton MS. Nero C. viii. f. 151.*

the foreign receipt of Ferriby, keeper of Edward III.'s wardrobe in England, was contributed by the receiver of queen Philippa,<sup>1</sup> and we have seen that after the amalgamation of the queen's with the king's household Philippa was to pay £10 a day towards joint expenses.<sup>2</sup> A petition of the Merciless Parliament in 1388, to which Richard II. agreed, referred to this precedent and imposed the same contribution upon Anne of Bohemia.<sup>3</sup>

In view of these and similar considerations, we ought to guard against ascribing financial failure to the personal delinquencies of a particular queen, although, of course, some may have been more extravagant than others. Times were hard, expenses were many, and some of the best civil servants may have been attracted away from the queen's employment by openings in larger departments.

#### (D) THE HOUSEHOLD SECRETARIAT AND THE QUEEN'S SEALS

From what has been said already concerning the queen's administrative machinery it will have been clear that secretarial activities on a large scale were involved, and that her clerks, normally itinerant with the household, taking what accommodation they could get and procuring their requisites as opportunity served, must often have laboured in unfavourable conditions. Exceptions to this, of course, were the queen's exchequer at Westminster<sup>4</sup> and the offices at La Réole, where much more privacy and order were obtainable. Many references in the accounts reflect the secretarial needs of the household. Such, for example, are the purchases of "ink for the wardrobe and the queen's books," or for "the account of the wardrobe and the account of the gold" in Eleanor of Castile's time,<sup>5</sup> or of "ink and pumice to be used in the queen's wardrobe" in the days of Isabella.<sup>6</sup> Parchment, usually bought by the *duodena*, or quire of twelve sheets, varied greatly in price. Purchases for Isabella in 1311-12, at Berwick, York, London and Westminster, ranged in cost from a minimum of 10d. a quire to a maximum of 2s.;<sup>7</sup> in France it was bought for her by the skin,

<sup>1</sup> See above, iv. 149-150.

<sup>2</sup> Above, p. 280.

<sup>3</sup> *Rot. Parl.* iii. 246.

<sup>4</sup> Or at York when continued war with Scotland made that city an administrative centre. See above, iii. 59.

<sup>5</sup> *Brit. Mus. Add. MS.* 35,294, *passim*.

<sup>6</sup> *E.A.* 375/9, f. 25.

<sup>7</sup> *Brit. Mus. Cott. MS. Nero C.* viii. f. 136. Cf. *E.A.* 375/9, ff. 22, 22d.

two for 2½d.<sup>1</sup> Fine vellum "for the queen's books," on the other hand, cost Eleanor of Castile as much as 3s. 9d. the quire.<sup>2</sup> Wax for sealing was sometimes bought, sometimes taken out of store. Whereas, for example, Eleanor of Castile's accounts record purchases of "red wax for the privy seal of the queen,"<sup>3</sup> Isabella's apothecary, Peter of Montpellier, dyed white wax red for the same purpose at a charge of 8d. the pound.<sup>4</sup> Among office requisites purchased were pyxes for keeping letters in,<sup>5</sup> leather trunks bound with iron for storing rolls and charters, and bags in which to put broken wax.<sup>6</sup>

The bulk of writing done in the queen's household must have been considerable, even if we exclude as not relevant to our subject the copying and illuminating upon which, for instance, Godfrey the *pictor*, Philip the queen's *scriptor* and Roger the *scriptor* were engaged in 1289-90.<sup>7</sup> Books and rolls of the queen's wardrobe were often characterised by real beauty both of handwriting and decoration.<sup>8</sup> Work on the queen's charters, writs and correspondence required not only good craftsmanship, but further skill in drafting and knowledge of formulae. Men like John Giffard, described in Isabella's accounts as "notary" or "clerk for the queen's letters,"<sup>9</sup> or Robert Wyville, her "secretary," keeper of her privy seal,<sup>10</sup> had heavy responsibilities, but thanks to them and their like at other times the queen's instruments correspond closely with those of the king and develop on parallel lines. It is interesting to notice that when Eleanor of Provence wished Edward I. to write a letter on her behalf about her claims abroad, she sent it to him ready drafted in his name, asking him to seal it if he found it

<sup>1</sup> *E.A.* 381/17.

<sup>2</sup> *Add. MS.* 35,294, f. 10.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* ff. 6d, 11d, 12d.

<sup>4</sup> *Cotton MS. Nero C.* viii. f. 136, etc. Cf. *E.A.* 375/19, m. 5.

<sup>5</sup> *Add. MS.* 35,294, f. 9.

<sup>6</sup> *E.A.* 375/9, ff. 22, 25. In 1321, on one occasion on which Edward II.'s great seal was temporarily in the custody of Isabella, she gave it "to be enclosed in a chest" not, as we might expect, to a clerk, but to the lady Elizabeth de Montibus, wife of a knight of her household (*C.C.R.*, 1318-23, p. 478).

<sup>7</sup> *Add. MS.* 35,294, ff. 4, 4d, and *passim*.

<sup>8</sup> The title of Isabella's first wardrobe book, for example, is enclosed in an ornamented frame, the initial letter of *Compotus* being floriated (*Nero C.* vii. f. 121), while even a little roll of her pantry and buttery has elaborate initials to the heading (*E.A.* 381/18). One of her accounts for 1357-58, much damaged in the Cotton fire, has script so minute that it can hardly be read without a magnifying glass, yet of exquisite finish and clearness (*Galba E.* xiv.).

<sup>9</sup> *E.A.* 375/9, ff. 14, 29.

<sup>10</sup> See above, ii. 309-310, iii. 2, 6.



satisfactory, otherwise to make what alterations he desired.<sup>1</sup> At times of special pressure the queen might borrow clerks from her husband's service. In 1311, for example, Isabella paid wages to four clerks of the royal chancery "transcribing the ordinances made by the earls and barons of England, extents of the queen's lands, and writs and memoranda of the wardrobe of the said queen,"<sup>2</sup> while Philippa paid a clerk in the same office for writing writs and commissions concerning her business.<sup>3</sup>

A study of the seals in use in the queen's household would in itself be a considerable investigation, which I have not had time to undertake with any completeness. They included, of course, not only her own but also those of her officials, many of which are preserved in files of receipts or other miscellaneous documents. Thus in the case of Margaret we have household indentures bearing the seals of her treasurer, her butler and others;<sup>4</sup> a series of letters patent of Isabella's treasurer, John of Newbury, are extant, in one case with a particularly fine impression of his seal;<sup>5</sup> while the fact that sums were assigned to the queens from the customs has caused the preservation among customs accounts of various sealed receipts.<sup>6</sup>

Our chief concern, however, is with the queen's own seals, which may best be treated in chronological order. Eleanor of Provence had both a great seal and a privy seal. The former was a seal of two pieces, in shape a pointed oval,  $3\frac{3}{4}$  by  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches. A fine impression of it, upon dark green wax, may be seen appended *en double queue* to a charter granting land to the Bishop of Ely in 1255-56.<sup>7</sup> At that date its legend described her on the obverse as *regina Anglie, domina Hibernie*, and on the reverse as *ducissa Normannie et Aquitanie, comitissa Andegavie*, but Henry III.'s renunciation of the English lands in northern France by the Treaty of Paris of 1259 made it necessary to have a new seal in which the legend should correspond with the altered facts. Accordingly, in an instrument of 1262, itself interesting from the

<sup>1</sup> *A.C.* xvi. 168.

<sup>2</sup> *Nero C.* viii. f. 136d.

<sup>3</sup> *T.R. Misc. Bk.* 205, p. 23. For instances of chancery clerks' writing in the king's wardrobe, see above, ii. 70.

<sup>4</sup> *E.A.* 359/28, 364/20.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* 393/3, no. 16.

<sup>6</sup> Such as those bearing the seals, applied *en simple queue* to red wax, of Philippa's treasurers Clonne, Cook and Ravenser (*C.A.* 70/3, 6, 20, 21). I must thank Miss M. H. Mills for calling my attention to this source of information.

<sup>7</sup> *Cott. Charter*, xvii. 6.

point of view of diplomatic because it was made expressly to remedy a defect in an earlier document, in which the name of Walter Merton, the chancellor, had appeared but to which his seal had not been appended, we may see an impression of a second seal, similar in shape and size to the first, but in which Eleanor on the obverse is described simply as *regina Anglie*, while on the reverse the legend runs *domina Hibernie et ducissa Aquitanie*.<sup>1</sup> I have found no unbroken impression of her privy seal, but traces upon red wax of a seal about  $1\frac{1}{8}$  inches in diameter may be seen *en placard* upon the dorse of several of her letters "given under our privy seal,"<sup>2</sup> while one letter close still keeps the tongue of parchment, bearing the address, which had been wrapped round it.<sup>3</sup>

The great and privy seals of the two queens of Edward I. were on similar lines. Eleanor of Castile's great seal was a pointed oval, with legend corresponding in arrangement with that of the second seal of Eleanor of Provence, and design not unlike hers, except that the lions and castles of Castile have been introduced on the obverse.<sup>4</sup> A good impression of her circular privy seal, about  $1\frac{1}{8}$  inches in diameter, bearing the legend *Secretum Alianore regine Anglie*, may be seen in the Record Office.<sup>5</sup> In Margaret's case, the wardrobe accounts record the cost of a great seal of two pieces in silver and a privy seal in gold, made for her in 1299 by William de Kele, goldsmith of London, at a total cost of £6 : 13 : 4,<sup>6</sup> and as we know that in 1306 a new privy seal in gold by the same maker cost £3 : 5s.,<sup>7</sup> he presumably charged £3 : 8 : 4 for the great seal. One might have expected a more marked difference in price considering the labour involved in making the matrix for the larger seal of two pieces.<sup>8</sup> In shape, legend and design Margaret's great seal recalled that of Eleanor, but the arms of England and Brabant were introduced on the

<sup>1</sup> *Harl. Charter*, 43 c. 42. Cf. also *P.R.O.*, *L.S.* 190. The wax used in these cases is uncoloured. I have not noticed any record of the cost of either of these seals. A great seal of two pieces made for the queen of Scotland in 1252 cost £2 : 9 : 6 (*E.A.* 349/21.)

<sup>2</sup> For example, *A.C.* x. 50.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* vii. 11.

<sup>4</sup> See *Add. Charter* 8129 and *P.R.O.*, *Anc. Deeds*, *L.S.* 196.

<sup>5</sup> *L.S.* 185, illustrated below, pl. III. For a letter under her privy seal in French, see *A.C.* xxx. 50, and for a Latin example, *ib.* x. 51, or the letter quoted in *Assize Roll*, 1014, m. 1.

<sup>6</sup> *E.A.* 355/17, 375/5.

<sup>7</sup> *Ib.* 369/11, f. 58d.

<sup>8</sup> See above, p. 132.

obverse and on the reverse fleurs-de-lys surrounded the arms of England.<sup>1</sup> Her privy seal was about an inch in diameter, bearing the letters of her name in the spaces of the rose-shaped device which encircled a shield with the arms of England and France. A good impression may be seen attached *en simple queue* to letters patent of 1301.<sup>2</sup>

With Isabella the question of seals became more complicated. Her great seal was a pointed oval of similar design to those of her predecessors, but of one piece only, and she used with it a round counter-seal  $1\frac{3}{8}$  inches in diameter.<sup>3</sup> Her privy seal was a little larger than that of Margaret, about  $1\frac{1}{8}$  inches in diameter, and it has already been pointed out that as early as 1317 methods were in use by her clerks for folding writs and applying the privy seal which were not adopted by the king's clerks till the forties.<sup>4</sup> Besides these, she had an exchequer seal and a signet. The former was a round seal of one piece,  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inches in diameter, bearing as legend *Sigillum scaccarii Isabelle regine Anglie*. An impression may be seen appended *en simple queue* to a receipt for money received from the king's exchequer in 1331.<sup>5</sup> Of the latter I have found no good impression, but a letter *donne souz nostre seignet* may be seen among Ancient Correspondence,<sup>6</sup> while among the objects inventoried after her death were *unus anulus cum uno signetto auri* and *signettum domine regine*.<sup>7</sup> In the same list appeared a seal in a sealed box pertaining to the office of receiver of Ponthieu, and another, in a similar box, described merely as pertaining to the county of Ponthieu. She had also a *signum*.<sup>8</sup> In the history of seals, therefore, as in every other respect, Isabella's arrangements seem to present more points of interest than those of any of the other queens.

Queen Philippa had a great seal,<sup>9</sup> but I have not found any

<sup>1</sup> See Birch, *Catalogue of Seals*, p. 798.

<sup>2</sup> *Add. Charter* 18,199, illustrated below, pl. VIII. Cf. Birch, *op. cit.* p. 799.

<sup>3</sup> Birch, *op. cit.* p. 800.

<sup>4</sup> For the seal, see *D.S.* 19, illustrated below, pl. III. Other examples may be seen in *W.S.* 299, 516, and fragments in *C.A.* 70/7, nos. 3, 5, 6. Good specimens of letters showing eight slits and in many cases traces of wax at the right of the dorse may be seen in *A.C.* xxxvi. 10, 11, 38, 72-74, and should be compared with *Exch. of Rec., Warr. for Issues* 1/7, commented upon above, p. 120, n. 6.

<sup>5</sup> *W.S.* 300.

<sup>6</sup> xxxvi. 75.

<sup>7</sup> *E.A.* 393/4.

<sup>8</sup> See above, p. 194, n. 2.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. *C.P.R.*, 1350-54, p. 435, and *ib.*, 1354-58, p. 594.



example of it. Her privy seal,  $1\frac{5}{8}$  inches in diameter, bore as design the arms of England quartering Hainault within a richly cusped circle, and its legend began with the word *secretum*.<sup>1</sup> Anne of Bohemia's privy seal had increased in size to a diameter of  $2\frac{1}{4}$  inches.<sup>2</sup> Traces of her signet may be seen on the dorse of a writ to her treasurer preserved among Ancient Correspondence.<sup>3</sup>

## SECTION II <sup>4</sup>

### PART I

#### THE CENTRAL ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM OF EDWARD, THE BLACK PRINCE

Both custom and experiment defined the territorial position of Edward of Woodstock, eldest son of Edward III.,<sup>5</sup> and unlike his brothers he owed little to those marriages of policy which characterised his father's family settlement. Revenues from the earldom of Chester maintained his infant expenditure from the age of three months,<sup>6</sup> although he did not receive the title

<sup>1</sup> A good impression, illustrated below, pl. VIII., is attached *en simple queue* to *Harl. Charter* 43 E 11 (not 110 as in printed catalogue). See also *W.S.* 122.

<sup>2</sup> An example attached *en simple queue* to *Add. Charter* 20,396 is illustrated below, pl. VIII.

<sup>3</sup> *A.C.* li. 21.

<sup>4</sup> This section (parts i. and ii.) is based upon a part of a Ph.D. thesis in the possession of the University of Manchester.

<sup>5</sup> The custom of differentiating between the various Edwards by adding the place of their birth is obviously convenient. Contemporary references to Edward of Woodstock are rare: see, however, *C. Pap. Reg. Pet.* i. pp. 29 and 376. Other royal sons are more often thus distinguished by contemporaries, e.g. Thomas of Woodstock (*Gasc.* 79 m. 10). The practice was more usual in the case of younger sons, who had for years frequently no title of nobility, whereas the eldest was usually vested with dignities in childhood. Edward "of Carnarvon" was an exception. The name is familiar in both mediaeval and modern usage. Edward of Windsor and Edward of Woodstock are less quickly recognised, though convenience demands such description. The fourteenth-century historian, with pardonable anticipation, which we cannot reasonably follow, sometimes got over the difficulty by calling the latter Edward IV. (*e.g. Anon. Chron.* p. 22, see also Mr. J. G. Edwards's review of this work, *E.H.R.* xliii. p. 108). The most usual modern description of him as "the Black Prince" was not contemporary (*D.N.B.*).

<sup>6</sup> Edward was born at Woodstock on June 15, 1330; he received a grant of 500 marks from the farm of Cheshire to meet the expenses of his household in Sept. 1330 (*C.P.R., 1330-34*, p. 2; *Foedera*, II. ii. 798). Other similar grants were sometimes delivered to Queen Philippa, as in Feb. 1331, when she was

of earl till he was three years old.<sup>1</sup> The ancient palatinate had now for a hundred years remained in royal control, and was already closely associated with the person of the king's eldest son.<sup>2</sup> Edward of Woodstock here succeeded to a position held in turn by those earlier Edwards, his father, grandfather and great-grandfather. Not till adolescence did he receive the revenues, responsibilities and title of prince of Wales,<sup>3</sup> which his father himself had never held.<sup>4</sup> But meanwhile a new title, associated with lands whose wealth to-day still saves the taxpayer's purse, was created in his favour, when in the parliament of March 1337 the earl of Chester was made also duke of Cornwall.<sup>5</sup> With the lands of the old Cornish earldom in Cornwall were associated those "foreign manors",<sup>6</sup> such as the honours of Wallingford, St. Valery and Berkhamsted, which earls Richard and Edmund had held in conjunction with their earldom, and such as the manor of Byfleet, which John of Eltham had held.<sup>7</sup> These

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granted all the income of Cheshire for the support of Edward and Eleanor, the king's sister (*C.P.R.*, 1330-34, p. 78), while even earlier she seems to have had some connection with Cheshire lands (*Chanc. Misc.* 9/58 m. 3d) which had not, however, been assigned her in dower. Sometimes Cheshire revenues were paid directly to the keeper of the lord Edward's wardrobe, as in Dec. 1332 (*C.C.R.*, 1330-33, p. 517). The queen continued to control Cheshire issues in the interests of her children, to order the household "at her will", and to remove ministers of earldom and of household at pleasure as late as 1334 (*C.P.R.*, 1330-34, p. 523).

<sup>1</sup> March 18, 1333 (*C. Ch. R.* iv. p. 300).

<sup>2</sup> Edward of Woodstock was sometimes called earl of Chester even before he received the title, e.g. in 1331 (*C.P.R.*, 1330-34, p. 18); in an account of the treasurer of Queen Philippa's household, between Jan. and Oct. 1331 (*Enr. Acc. (W. and H.)* 2 m. 10), and in May 1332 (*I.R.* 258).

<sup>3</sup> May 12, 1343 (*Report on the Dignity of a Peer*, v. p. 43).

<sup>4</sup> Edward I. and Edward II. had both been associated with Wales before their accession, but Edward II. never granted the principality to his son. Thus it is only with the Black Prince that the heirs to the English throne begin their unbroken line of succession to the principality of Wales.

<sup>5</sup> See above, iii. pp. 37 and 62.

<sup>6</sup> Miss M. Coate, in an article on "The Duchy of Cornwall, its History and Administration, 1640-60" (*Trans. R.H.S.* 4th series, vol. x. pp. 135-170), shows how the seventeenth-century duchy included (1) the *antiqua maneria* of 1337, i.e. manors in Cornwall which had belonged to the earldom of Cornwall; (2) the *forinseca maneria*, outside Cornwall, but "annexed to the duchy by the charter of creation"; (3) the *annexata maneria*, subsequently incorporated with the duchy. This article is not, of course, concerned with the fourteenth century, except incidentally, though in the absence of any other treatment Miss Coate has been obliged to devote some attention to the charter of creation, "the caption of seisin" of 1338, etc., and the light which such documents throw on the status of the duke's tenants in Cornwall.

<sup>7</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1334-38, p. 381.

became in time, but not immediately, that unbreakable entity the duchy of Cornwall, which, like its later sister, the duchy of Lancaster, to this day survives as an administrative unit.<sup>1</sup>

The lord Edward's dignities did not cease with this innovation. In 1362, when need arose to make provision for the government of those districts of south-western France newly added to English rule by the treaty of Calais, a still greater title was created in his favour, and the first and last prince of Aquitaine took his place in the ranks of English nobility.<sup>2</sup> Nor was the title meaningless: <sup>3</sup> not only did it bring in its train endless opportunities for active government, for diplomatic and military skill, it brought also

<sup>1</sup> All the *forinseca maneria* were certainly not associated with the lands in Cornwall for administrative purposes in the fourteenth century. Many of those in Devon, e.g. the manors of Lydford and Bradinch, or the fee-farm of the city of Exeter, were included in the accounts of Cornish ministers, or in the register of letters concerning Cornwall, whereas Kennington, Byfleet, Berkhamsted and the rest were not. These are normally included in the prince's lands "in England" as opposed to those in Cheshire, Wales and Cornwall. See, for example, the register of letters concerning lands in England (see below, p. 310) or the *valor* of the prince's lands made after his death (below, p. 363). Geographical proximity naturally demanded that the prince's lands in Devon should be associated for administrative purposes with those in Cornwall. But these were not normally described as belonging to "the duchy of Cornwall". The manor of Kirton, Lincolnshire, is once referred to as "parcel of our duchy of Cornwall" (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278 f. 100d), so are Weldon and Rockingham, Northants (*ib.* f. 284). By the time of Henry IV. the foreign manors were included in the ministers' accounts, with the lands in Cornwall (*P.R.O. Lists and Indexes*, iv. p. 124).

<sup>2</sup> *Dipl. Docs. Exch.* 1106 and 7; *Gasc.* 75 m. 16, 17, 18; *Foedera* III. ii. pp. 667-670. The "principality" did not come into existence till July 19, 1362. Documents concerned with the temporary administration (1360-62) of the old duchy of Aquitaine and the newly ceded districts (while John Chandos was "lieutenant-general in the parts of France" or "in the lordship of Aquitaine") normally refer to "the duchy" or "lordship". For example, the seneschal was appointed to the office of the seneschalcy of the duchy in July 1361 (*Gasc.* 74 m. 8), to that of the lordship on June 8, 1362 (*Gasc.* 75 m. 25). Only once have I found the word "principality" used before July 1362, when letters of John Chandos describe him as "lieutenant of the king of England in the whole principality of Aquitaine" on March 8, 1362 (*E.A.* 176/20, no. 19). It is remarkable how throughout 1362 the phrase "lordship of Aquitaine" replaces "duchy" in ordinary usage. Some idea of creating an independent unit of government, perhaps even a kingdom, and of sending the Black Prince to rule it, would seem to have been early afloat, though the actual form was not apparent till July 1362. (Cf. Delachenal, iv. p. 3.)

<sup>3</sup> Unlike the strange title "prince of England" which later generations have sometimes assigned to the Black Prince, and which is not without contemporary confirmation in both record (*A.P.* 333, no. 47) and chronicle (e.g. *Anon. Chron.* p. 49, see also *E.H.R.* xliii. p. 108). For later use of the phrase, see a pamphlet by J. P. Earwaker, *On Certain Swords Inscribed Edwardus Prins Anglie*, printed in *Archaeological Journal*, xxx. p. 1.



to Gascony the presence of a pretentious court, splendid with the trappings of the most ostentatious age of mediaeval chivalry; "*li estat dou prince et de madame la princesse estoient adonc si grant et si estoffet que nulz aultres de prince ne de seigneur, en crestiennetet, ne sacomparoit au leur.*"<sup>1</sup> In this hothouse of display was reared the prince's second son, and who knows what memories of childhood stirred in his mind when this son in turn created another English principality in his loyal Cheshire earldom.<sup>2</sup> Though little permanent significance can be attributed to these forgotten principalities, the one forced into splendid if brief flowering, the other scarce attaining maturity, their existence for the time being pleased the localities thus singled out for recognition, besides enhancing the dignity of the royal holder. As a sphere of ambition the principality of Aquitaine was unparalleled; financially it was a continuous drain. When the Black Prince was forced by failure and ill-health to resign the principality in 1372,<sup>3</sup> the title was soon dropped, and the phrase "the duchy" crept again into use.<sup>4</sup> The waning of English influence in Gascony made the principality a mockery.

The Black Prince's pretensions and resources were rivalled by those of his brother John of Gaunt, for a time "king of Castile and Leon" in name at least, who also held through marriage the earldoms, franchises and lands of the house of Lancaster. Of empty titles Edward also had his share; from 1366 he was "lord of Biscay and Castro Urdiales,"<sup>5</sup> which con-

<sup>1</sup> Froissart, *Chroniques*, ed. Luce, vii. p. 66.

<sup>2</sup> Viz. Sept. 1397 (*Statutes*, ii. p. 100, *Rot. Parl.* iii. p. 353-354). The material resources of the county palatine were then increased by the inclusion of the forfeit Arundel inheritance; compare the association of the "foreign fees" with the duchy of Cornwall, and of Poitou, Agenais, Périgord, etc. with the principality of Aquitaine. For the principality of Chester, see above, iv. p. 28.

<sup>3</sup> Nov. 3, 1372 (*Rot. Parl.* ii. p. 309). Accounts were submitted to the king, however, from Oct. 5, 1372 (*E.A.* 179/8), when the principality virtually ended (see also *Gasc.* 86 m. 2). On his resignation the prince showed that he had always regarded the financial resources of Aquitaine as inadequate to maintain his state and government and to carry on the wars against the king's enemies, and this reason alone is suggested as a cause of his resignation.

<sup>4</sup> The words "principality of Aquitaine" do not, I think, appear on the Gascon rolls after the autumn of 1372 (*Gasc.* 85); in the next year the phrases "duchy" and "lordship" are again in use (*ib.* 86). The handing over of "the duchy" to John of Gaunt in 1390 was not in name an attempt to revive the principality; he was only made duke, and his powers were more limited than those of Edward in 1362.

<sup>5</sup> *Foedera*, III. ii. p. 802 (Sept. 23, 1366).

cession from King Pedro had never any practical advantage.<sup>1</sup> The Black Prince's late marriage with Joan "the fair maid of Kent," a lady of undoubted beauty, if doubtful reputation, was dictated by affection alone, though her inheritance was by no means to be despised. At the time of his death the Black Prince's lands brought him in some eight thousand six hundred pounds yearly,<sup>2</sup> no extraordinary sum even when increased by sundry other revenues.<sup>3</sup> But the royal families of mediaeval England were no strangers to poverty; outward display could be maintained while servants remained unpaid, and the hero of English arms can have lost little prestige through the leanness of his purse.

In his own generation the renown of the Black Prince was indeed unsurpassed. "*Quo obeunte omnis obiit spes Anglorum; quoniam eo vivente nullius hostis incursum, eo presente nullius belli congressus, timuerunt.*"<sup>4</sup> Born to a heritage of responsibility shared by many of his successors, he was unique in the length of his tenure of the position of heir apparent, unique in his political and diplomatic responsibilities, unique in the circumstances of his death. Alone among the third Edward's sons, he was just old enough to play his part in that victory of Crécy which kindled the imagination of his fellow countrymen, and his youthful figure became the focus of English patriotism, still strong with the energy of the new born. Such emotions were intensified by his later victories, and not even his ultimate failure in Aquitaine dimmed this national respect. Nor was he quite untouched by the more obscure potentialities of his age: for a time he was himself the hope of the commons<sup>5</sup> against the imbecilities of the court and the vested interests of aristocratic privilege, while his servants became the backbone of a new court party. Yet the witness of contemporary eulogy or condemnation, whether of friend or foe, obscures the man by the halo of the hero; and small evidence remains from which to assess his personal qualities. The direct ruler for many years of no small part of Britain and of

<sup>1</sup> Amongst other such valueless concessions was "the right of fighting in the van of the battle against the infidels" (*P.R.O. Lists and Indexes*, xlix. p. 24).

<sup>2</sup> See below, p. 363.

<sup>3</sup> See below, pp. 363-364.

<sup>4</sup> *Chronicon Anglie*, p. 91 (R.S.).

<sup>5</sup> *E.g.* "Mortuo, ut diximus, domino Edwardo principe, cum adhuc parliamentum duraret, crevit desperatio militibus de comitatibus" (*ib.* p. 92).

France must perforce remain an enigmatic figure. Yet the organisation which made his activities possible derives an added interest from the achievements of his life, whether it owed much or little to his personal impetus.

The government of the Black Prince's scattered lands<sup>1</sup> was originally directed through the domestic organisation of their lord, as in the case of kings and royal sons before and after him, and of all magnates in western Europe according to their degree. From the dependent household of infancy, an institution in embryo, there rapidly developed a household organisation capable of superintending the government of Cheshire earldom and Cornish duchy and of controlling the domestic management of a keeper of England. This was no grandiose nursery such as centred round the persons of his younger brothers and sisters, but an active agent of government, capable of rapid adaptation to the demands of increasing revenues and increasing business. Thus, when the principality of Wales was added to its sphere, specialisation and localisation became the order of the day, while these familiar tendencies were still further hastened by the necessities of foreign affairs, with their train of wars and royal absences. The Black Prince's household then was no static body, but an institution rapidly shaping itself to meet changing external conditions, which fostered and recognised new growths within itself; these, although closely associated with the parent, acquired in time a position of independence. Expansion in one direction led inevitably to contraction in another, and hence a continuous process of definition was at work. From the simple undifferentiated household centring in the baby lord Edward there grew a flexible and efficient centralised system of government, which gathered together in Westminster or London the diverse threads of varying local liberties and customs, which maintained some continuity of policy and unity of control, which supplied overseas forces and overseas courts with means of sustenance, and for eight consecutive years maintained the government of his insular lands in the absence of the prince of Aquitaine.

The description of "household" for this centralised govern-

<sup>1</sup> Compare Froissart's comment on the English baronage: "les terres et revenues des barons d'Engleterre sont par places et moult esparses" (Froissart, *Chroniques*, ed. Luce, i. p. 257).



ment, operating indifferently in the prince's presence or absence, is an anachronism; it was a household only by tradition and in its historical antecedents. During the span of a single life were enacted, on a smaller scale and within narrower limits, those various tendencies of evolution which in the English state produced the national government-office from the starting-point of the king's bedroom, and gave the country its governmental capital. This administrative system of the Black Prince, modelled on the royal plan, was moreover characteristic of his age; the government of great fief and kingdom were similar in constitution. The aristocrats of the period likewise rejoiced in regalian privileges within their lands and possessed household organisations very similar in general aspect, if not in all points of detail; in all, the same tendencies towards centralisation were at work.<sup>1</sup> The national government might be excluded from many an immunity; king's wives or sons, magnates of church and state, might hold semi-regal franchises to the detriment of royal authority; but within each little state within the state, each cross-section of scattered territories and single government, the tentacles of uniformity were tightening their hold. The administrative system of the Black Prince is no isolated or insignificant institution, but a characteristic feature of the age, when a king gave away with one hand what he seized with the other, when monarchical and baronial centralisation marched step by step.

Some degree of uniformity in all subordinate royal administrations was, however, maintained by the king's government in the personnel of the clerks who manned them. These were frequently trained in royal household, in chancery or exchequer; these remained "king's clerks," and might be loaned from one administration to another.<sup>2</sup> Such personal bonds were rarely shared with the other great feudatories;<sup>3</sup> and the subordinate royal administrations profited when their problems could be met by traditions and procedure learnt in the king's service, and the king gained also from the pervasive influence of his servants. A Gilbertian height of absurdity was reached when Peter Lacy, the Black Prince's receiver-general and keeper of the great wardrobe,

<sup>1</sup> See above, iii. p. 198.

<sup>2</sup> See above, iii. pp. 253-254.

<sup>3</sup> But see above, iii. p. 254.

gave up neither appointment on his promotion to be keeper of the king's privy seal in 1367.<sup>1</sup> Similar combinations of office within the prince's system were common enough, and as mediæval man rarely drew hard-and-fast distinctions between his duties in one capacity and his duties in another, the student may be confronted by puzzling problems.

This central administrative system of the Black Prince unified the diverse independent franchises of which his lands were very largely composed. For his appanage was remarkable for the exclusiveness of its forms of government: in Chester, Wales and Gascony, and to a lesser degree in Cornwall, independent and self-sufficing states had grown up through a combination of similar circumstances, in which geographical position and military necessity, seigniorial privilege and royal convenience, conscious policy and the accidents of historical evolution, all played their part. Local customs and details of government and nomenclature might vary, but these independent administrative units were substantially alike in their nominal freedom from the control of the king and the national government departments. A comparative survey of their machinery in detail, in the existing state of our knowledge, would be difficult; it could not fail to be interesting.

Oldest in independence was the palatine earldom of Chester, whose earl was in Norman times girt with the trappings of a limited royalty. Here the privileges of the sword of Chester eclipsed those of the crown of England; here the functions of central courts of justice, itinerant commissioners and normal county courts were combined in a single judicial body; here a local exchequer in one aspect controlled the collection of revenue and supervision of accountants, in another directed the activities of the local seal; here legal memory was still limited by the doings of an ancient earl. Cheshire was not represented in the English parliament, nor did her men recognise the demands of parliamentary taxation. The justice and chamberlain of Cheshire, the one in judicial and military, the other in financial and sec-

<sup>1</sup> See above, iii. p. 253, and below, p. 328. Miss Putnam notices an even greater anomaly in connection with the justices of labourers. "A justice would issue writs to himself as sheriff to summon jurors and attach delinquents, and would then as sheriff report to himself as justice that the writs had been executed" (*Statutes of Labourers*, p. 53).

retarial business, here carried on the earl's government under the ultimate direction of his household officials or his own person. But royal control had for a century been tending to break down the barriers of local privilege, and to this process the household system of the Black Prince made a large contribution. For example, the earl's demesnes, the custody of escheats and the other incidents of land tenure were in his later years administered from his Westminster offices, and the independence of the local escheator was thus checked.<sup>1</sup> Indeed by the fourteenth century even the spirit of palatine independence would seem to have been dying; the forms were unlikely to stand for long supported only by a diminishing self-consciousness.

The independent system of government of the principality of Wales had less well-established roots. But Carnarvon and Carmarthen were each, like Chester, the seat of a local exchequer and chancery, and the centre of judicial administration for North and South Wales respectively. There, as at Chester, the justices and chamberlains were the prince's permanent local representatives, and presided over the lesser officials of the shires. The machinery which Edward I. probably consciously borrowed on the one hand from the Cheshire palatinate, on the other from the English shire system (though it was considerably modified in application to South Wales) continued to function throughout the fourteenth century. On the surface all was well. But Welsh political and administrative history in this period has not been studied in great detail,<sup>2</sup> and quiescence would not seem to have been its keynote. Marcher objections to principality-claims, with attempts at a definition of crown rights,<sup>3</sup> perhaps some official

<sup>1</sup> I deal with this and other points of Cheshire administration in my unpublished thesis on aspects of Cheshire history in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, in the possession of the University of Manchester.

<sup>2</sup> " . . . the history of Wales does not end with the loss of its independence," W. Rees, *South Wales and the March, 1284-1415*, p. viii. This "social and agrarian study" is one of the few recent detailed works on mediaeval Wales after the Edwardian conquest. Other contributions have been made by Mr. D. L. Evans, who treats of Welsh administration as well as other aspects of Welsh history in "Some Notes on the History of the Principality of Wales in the time of the Black Prince" (*Cymmrodorion Society's Publications*, 1927), and of the prince's council and Flintshire in his introduction to *Flintshire Ministers' Accounts, 1328-53, 1929* (Flintshire Historical Society, Record Series, No. 2).

<sup>3</sup> *Statutes*, I. p. 345. See also *Cymmrodorion Society's Publications*, loc. cit. pp. 84-99.



deference to Welsh national prejudice,<sup>1</sup> and certainly some fear of conspiracy with Scottish or French foes, above all the mutterings of national discontent,<sup>2</sup> these are facts which demand investigation. Towards a solution of such problems, the details of the Black Prince's long rule will certainly make a contribution, as they may also help to explain the success of Owen Glyndwr's national appeal at the end of the century. But whatever the undercurrents of feeling, the government of Wales undoubtedly gained in efficiency from the continued operation of centralised control. No great local changes of administrative method would seem to have disturbed the working of the local machinery of government, though absentee justices of great social and political position perhaps caused a readjustment of judicial business and official responsibility in Wales as in Cheshire.

The government of the duke of Cornwall's lands in Devon and Cornwall approximated more closely to the normal government of an English shire, though they cut across the county boundaries of Devon and Cornwall. But the ancient earldom of Cornwall had enjoyed semi-regalian privileges which were inherited by the duchy, and its system of government, of which the details have not yet been worked out, was evidently outside, if akin to, the regular shire system.<sup>3</sup> Wales and Cheshire yielded their harvest of spearmen and bowmen, clad in green and white, of revenues and supplies of all kinds to the betterment of their lords' resources,<sup>4</sup> but Cornwall had in addition the wealth of

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.* p. 57, where it is suggested that the prince's council deliberately adopted colours of national significance for the uniform of Welsh troops. But see also *Flintshire Ministers' Accounts, 1328-1353*, p. lvi, where Mr. Evans shows that green and white uniforms were also bought for archers from Cheshire.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Evans, *Cymm. Soc. Pub. loc. cit.* pp. 40-45, indicates some national feeling early in the reign. Later the career of Owen of Wales witnesses to its intensity.

<sup>3</sup> Ducal officials were responsible for the administration and the king's ministers were excluded from the duke's lands. Fines, etc., which would normally have come to the royal exchequer, were paid to the duke. The exchequer of Exeter, in existence in 1366 (*C.P.R., 1377-81*, p. 154), is rarely mentioned and can hardly have taken the prominent part in administration which was played, for instance, by the exchequers of Chester or Carnarvon.

<sup>4</sup> Mr. Evans, *loc. cit.*, analyses in detail the contribution of Wales to the English forces abroad. He shows that as many as 5000 Welshmen were possibly present at the battle of Crécy (p. 51), whereas only a few picked household troops in constant attendance on the prince's person are likely to have taken part in the battle of Poitiers (*ib.* p. 64). These perhaps only numbered some 150 men.

the stannaries, the miners and workers in lead, the seamen and shipping, and above all a convenient proximity to the port of Plymouth, which were essential to the convenience of its Gascon overlord. Independent privilege in a narrower field was also shown by the foreign manors of the duchy, and such honours as Wallingford, St. Valery and Berkhamsted flaunted their ancient integrity over Thames and Chilterns. Modern official dignity may presume the unity of the early duchy and antedate the title of "duchy of Cornwall office," but such appellations for the fourteenth century are unhistorical, whatever may have been true when the ministers of the ill-fated Stuart Henry gathered for conclave, as is said, in his panelled chamber over Fleet Street. The duchy in its strictest sense knew in the fourteenth century no governmental unity save the control of the Black Prince's central system, and this it shared, not only with his court, but with every part of his far-flung domain.

In their dependence on centralised control the "English lands"—then for the most part not in England<sup>1</sup>—differed from those of Gascony. The connection between them and the prince's offices in Westminster and London was more intimate: on the one hand local accountants flocked to Westminster and local petitions came to the prince's council; on the other, central officials, auditors, justices and special commissioners paid annual visits to each separate locality. The prince himself also visited parts of his dominions, an occasion for rigorous tightening of machinery and vigorous expression of local tradition, an occasion of ostentatious display, of wise hospitality, an occasion long to be remembered.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The principality of Wales, the marches of Wales, and Cheshire were no part of England in the eyes of the mediaeval administrator, as many records testify, for example a commission to be keeper of the fees "as well in the county of Chester, Wales and the March of Wales as in England" (*C.F.R.* v. p. 276, 1341). The position of Cornwall is less certain; for example, the prince's steward of lands was appointed to act "as well in Wales and Chester as in Cornwall and elsewhere in England" (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144, f. 39d), dower was granted to Joan, princess of Wales, from the prince's lands, "as well in England, Cornwall and Devon, as in Wales, Cheshire and Flint" (*Chester Plea Roll*, 80 m. 3; cf. *C.C.R.*, 1374-77, p. 405, and *C.P.R.*, 1374-77, p. 374). Even to-day the title of the king's eldest son is "prince of Wales and earl of Chester" in the peerage of the united kingdom, duke of Cornwall in the peerage of England (*Burke's Peerage*, p. 16).

<sup>2</sup> For the ramifications of the prince's Cheshire visit (1353), see for example *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 279; also *Chester Plea Roll*, 65 m. 1 and 2. The prince never visited Wales (Evans, *Cymm. Soc. Pub. loc. cit.* p. 100).

Geographical position gave Cornwall the doubtful advantage of several such visits, for Plymouth was the most convenient port for departure or arrival to and from Gascony. Thus some degree of personal contact was maintained between the prince, his ministers, and local needs and interests.

In its main outlines the governmental system of Gascony was not unlike the independent systems of Wales or Chester, though the privileges of innumerable towns and of innumerable feudatories circumscribed its activities on every hand. The occasional lieutenants who came in times of crisis to represent the English duke in Aquitaine, have no analogy in principality or palatinate, and the council of Gascony was more highly organised, specialised and localised than the fluctuating committees of visiting councillors in Wales and Chester. But the seneschal, the supreme military, judicial and administrative head, and the subordinate constable<sup>1</sup> or financial minister, correspond respectively to justices and chamberlains of Wales and Chester. But Gascon government was more frequently threatened by internal disruption or swept by the eddying currents of foreign politics, and administration was inevitably dominated by political considerations. Moreover the English king had so obvious an interest in Gascon contentment that even when he had abandoned all but the highest attributes of sovereignty he was unable to withdraw his watchful eye and restraining hand. The Black Prince was confronted in Gascony with a situation of intrinsic difficulty, intensified by the experimental nature of his tenure of the principality, and jeopardised to an uncertain extent by the non-fulfilment of the clauses of the treaty of Calais.

A study of the Black Prince's government of Gascony raises some curious problems which almost fall outside the scope of a discussion of his central government. His two years' tutelage in Gascon politics when acting as his father's lieutenant between

<sup>1</sup> In time of war the seneschal was normally allowed at the king's cost a retinue of thirty men-at-arms, of whom ten were to be knights, and thirty mounted archers (*E.A.* 171/4, file 1, part 1, no. 2, 1359); whereas the constable had only twelve men-at-arms, and twelve mounted archers (*ib.* 169/2, part 1, no. 72). Sometimes the constable's retinue was larger, as appears in the tardy payment to a former constable of the wages of twenty-four men-at-arms, thirty foot-archers and thirty *pedites servientes* (*I.R.* 418, Aug. 26, 1364). The expense of these wages was actually incurred at least some five years earlier.



1355 and 1357 is quite outside it. But after the creation of the principality in 1362, the central government at home took care of the prince's rights in England, and the prince transferred himself and his household to his lordship of Aquitaine. Thus his household there became to some extent the centre of Gascon administration; of its share in English government there is little evidence. As we shall see, however, there is little material for a study of the prince's household in Gascony, and there is also little enough evidence of the working of the normal Gascon machine. It seems reasonable to suppose that the presence of an active suzerain and his court would have modified the form and spirit of Gascon government, for many of the difficulties of its administration were due to the indifference of its overlord, and the remoteness of the English government departments which ultimately controlled it. Unfortunately little detailed study has yet been published of the normal administration of Gascony in the fourteenth century, and till this is understood such changes as were involved in the creation of the principality can hardly be gauged.<sup>1</sup> But whatever may have been the sphere of the national English departments in the administration of the duchy of Aquitaine in normal circumstances, and even this share is elusive and uncertain, there is no doubt that it was circumscribed still further when the Black Prince was vested with the principality to "be true prince." Centralisation in Gascony, a vigorous council, a resident ruler with personal adherents clamouring, with success, for office and reward,<sup>2</sup> yet surrounded by local magnates currying favour or standing on their rights, these things were new factors in Gascon government. Yet there was no conscious breach of continuity, and the only administrative experiment during the prince's rule would seem to have been the creation

<sup>1</sup> The subject is briefly touched on in *Pl. Edw. II.* pp. 214-224, and the officials for the reign of Edward II. listed in Appendix i. Dr. Lodge's *Gascony under English Rule* deals briefly in chapter vii. with "Government and Administration," and I understand she has in progress a more detailed work on Gascon government. A study of Gascon administration has also been made by Miss E. Pole-Stuart in a Ph.D. thesis on "Some Aspects of the Political and Administrative History of Gascony, 1303-27," summarised in *Bull. I.H.R.* v. no. 15, Feb. 1928. See also D. Brissaud, *Les Anglais en Guyenne* (1875), and the masterly chapter on the principality of Aquitaine in Delachenal, *Histoire de Charles V*, vol. iv., which, however, merely touches on administrative machinery.

<sup>2</sup> Froissart, *Chroniques*, ed. Luce, vi. p. 78.

of a higher court of judicial appeal located in Gascony instead of England, namely, the court of superiority, the emergence of a new head of the old court of Gascony in the judge of Aquitaine,<sup>1</sup> and possibly the introduction of a new source of authority in the prince's great seal.<sup>2</sup> Otherwise the local machinery of government remained substantially unchanged; the hierarchy of officials, seneschal, constable, controller and the rest, continued to operate as before, but over a wider geographical area;<sup>3</sup> the court and council and treasury of Gascony still functioned at the "capital" of Bordeaux. Nor did the newly ceded districts feel any substantial change in their government, for both English and French overlord used existing institutions; administrative methods in both countries were very similar.<sup>4</sup> But Gascon revenues were inadequate to meet the expenses of princely display and politic generosity, and heavy taxation was a rock which wrecked the new-launched state.

The unsolved problems of Gascon administration may be illustrated by the question of sealing in both duchy and principality. An elusive chancellor appears in 1323, in charge of the duchy seal, and it is generally assumed that he continued to function.<sup>5</sup> A superficial survey of Gascon government in the middle of the century, however, reveals no trace of his activities as a secretarial official. The conspicuous seals at that time are "the seal of the court of Gascony," perhaps in the custody of the seneschal, and the various "seals and counterseals for contracts" in the custody of special keepers in several localities. All were presumably of the class of "authentic seals," or "seals of jurisdiction" which were widely used in France.<sup>6</sup> Their place in Gascon administration is not immediately evident.<sup>7</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> Lodge, *op. cit.* p. 142. But a judge of the court of Gascony certainly appears before the principality of Aquitaine.

<sup>2</sup> See below, pp. 302-306.

<sup>3</sup> Thus the seneschal of Gascony became seneschal of Aquitaine.

<sup>4</sup> Delachenal, iv. p. 20.

<sup>5</sup> For example, Lodge, *op. cit.* pp. 141-142. Wilkinson, *Chancery*, p. 12.

<sup>6</sup> Giry, pp. 649-650. The seneschals of the various subordinate districts into which Gascony was divided for administrative purposes, Landes, Saintonge, etc., had also their respective seals for use for all purposes within their own areas. But the seal of the court of Gascony certainly, the seal for contracts in Bordeaux perhaps, had a less restricted scope.

<sup>7</sup> These seals have not as yet been discussed in works on Gascon government. Their use and survival is yet another illustration of how the English

seal of the court of Gascony appears early in the reign of Edward III.<sup>1</sup> and was apparently the most important duchy seal; it was normally used by the seneschal or his lieutenant, presumably in execution of the judicial activities of that court,<sup>2</sup> but it was also used in letters from the steward to constable<sup>3</sup> or auditors<sup>4</sup> on financial matters, for the inspection of earlier royal letters under the great seal,<sup>5</sup> and in actual grants.<sup>6</sup> It was perhaps occasionally known as the "royal seal of Gascony."<sup>7</sup> The writing department of the court of Gascony had become elaborate and remunerative by the time of the Black Prince.<sup>8</sup> The seals and counter-seals for contracts,<sup>9</sup> besides giving private

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dukes of Aquitaine respected and continued local customs. But the sphere of these seals in Gascon government and also their relation to English royal seals are subjects which need investigation.

<sup>1</sup> The earliest I have found at the Public Record Office appear in a bundle of writs concerned with the accounts of the constable of Bordeaux, 1-3 Edward III. (*E.A.* 165/10). The seal was always a single-faced seal of red wax, and bore the leopards of England in slightly different designs at different times.

<sup>2</sup> If, as is possible, the seal of the court of Gascony was kept by the chancellor (Lodge, *op. cit.* pp. 140, 148), his position was certainly inferior to that of the seneschal, and he can have had very little general administrative importance.

<sup>3</sup> *E.g.* an order to pay the king's procurator for services in receiving fealty on the king's behalf, May 1362 (*E.A.* 176/20, no. 16).

<sup>4</sup> Order to the auditors of the constable's accounts to make allowance for certain funeral expenses, Sept. 1361 (*E.A.* 171/4, file 4, no. 1).

<sup>5</sup> *E.g.* *E.A.* 169/2, part 3, no. 68; *ib.* 171/4, file 1, part 4, no. 38.

<sup>6</sup> *Arch. hist. Gir.* xxxiv. p. 179.

<sup>7</sup> *E.A.* 169/1, no. 4. This is a seal used by the seneschal of the duchy (1351); unfortunately not enough survives of the seal to identify it certainly with the seal of the court of Gascony.

<sup>8</sup> The "escrivenie" of the court of Gascony was granted to John de Cantiran in 1370 in recompense for his great losses in the wars (*Gasc.* 91, m. 9). There were already "assessors of the profits and emoluments of the little seal," which may or may not have been connected with this court (*ib.* m. 6). For little seals connected with minor royal jurisdictions in France see Gir, p. 650. A tariff of charges for the sealing of writs was in operation by 1373 (Lodge, *op. cit.* p. 142). As early as 1354 the controller of the castle of Bordeaux had received a fee "racione officii mei scribanie vascon' constitut'" (*E.A.* 171/4, file 2, no. 8); still earlier (1340) there was "officium memorandi castri nostri Burdeg' ac custodiam papirorum registrarum et protocollorum notariorum decendentium" (*ib.* no. 21).

<sup>9</sup> Actual seals for contracts for Bordeaux survive from the middle of Edward III.'s reign (*e.g.* *E.A.* 169/2, part 3, nos. 40 and 45). They are always of greenish black wax, and contain the arms of England, with the addition of a star, crescent, crown, etc. The counter-seal was smaller than the seal, and usually showed three fishes and a waved background, and included the word "Gironde." A small black seal appears towards the end of the reign of Edward I., the seal of the "clerk keeper of the constabulary of Bordeaux" (*E.A.*



deeds a legal form,<sup>1</sup> at times seem merely to have reinforced and re-emphasised for local consumption the decrees of the great seal of England;<sup>2</sup> frequently also they reissued the grants of earlier dukes, or king's lieutenants, or the prince of Aquitaine. Both the seal of the court of Gascony and the seals and counter-seals for contracts were royal seals of indeterminate sphere. But what was their relation to the great seal of England? Accepted opinion apparently supposes that the king's great seal had its ordinary English validity in Aquitaine.<sup>3</sup> But even in England there were territorial limits to the complete competence of the great seal, for example in the palatinate of Chester, and it is perhaps arguable that it had similarly only a limited sphere of usefulness in Gascony, that in fact it operated, generally speaking, within fixed territorial limits, and had not normally the wider range of influence of more personal seals.<sup>4</sup>

With the creation of the principality, the intervention of the great seal of England was virtually excluded;<sup>5</sup> the seal of the court of Gascony is no longer in evidence; the seals for contracts certainly continued to function.<sup>6</sup> Soon after the prince of Wales

159/5), and is somewhat like the later seal for contracts. A seal for contracts in Bordeaux was certainly in existence before 1323; further, such seals were to be established by the attempted reforms of that year (*Foedera*, II. i. p. 505).

<sup>1</sup> Giry, 649-650.

<sup>2</sup> A letter under the great seal issued on Aug. 1, 1354, was inspected at Bordeaux and cited in full by the keeper of the seal for contracts there on Oct. 1, 1354 (*E.A.* 171/4, file 1, part 4, no. 34). More frequently the seal for contracts was used on letters issued some years previously, as when letters of 1347 were inspected by the keeper of the seal for contracts in 1356 (*ib.* 169/2, part 3, no. 79).

<sup>3</sup> Certainly in normal circumstances letters under the great seal were accepted in Gascony, whereas letters under the exchequer seal might have been regarded as invalid (Wilkinson, *Chancery*, p. 11; *A.C.* xli. no. 127).

<sup>4</sup> Compare the distinction drawn by Professor Baldwin between the great seal of the county palatine of Lancaster, which was territorial, and the privy seal of the duke, which was personal and knew no territorial limits to its authority (*Bull. I.H.R.* iv. *loc. cit.*).

<sup>5</sup> Witness the diminished size and interest of the Gascon rolls. The prince certainly received royal letters for publication in Gascony, however, *e.g.* in 1366 (*Gasc.* 79, m. 11, m. 12).

<sup>6</sup> No seal of the court of Gascony under the principality seems to survive at the Public Record Office, but the seal for contracts does, *e.g.* *E.A.* 176/20, no. 29 (1365). Also Doüet d'Arcq ii. 4531 (1368). Both seals continued in use after the failure of the principality. In 1377 the king's seals of the court of Gascony, of the provost of the Ombrière, and the seal and counter-seal for contracts used in Bordeaux, which were made of lead, were so old that they

became prince of Aquitaine he is found for the first time with his own great seal, in the custody of a dignified chancellor.<sup>1</sup> This seal was operative in France alone; what was its relation to Gascon government? To some extent it doubtless replaced the king's great seal;<sup>2</sup> to some extent also it was perhaps a new source of authority, though grants under it were still often reissued under some other local seal;<sup>3</sup> very probably it superseded the old seal of the court of Gascony. The chancellor became, during the fifteenth century, the supreme judicial official of the duchy,<sup>4</sup> but he is unlikely to have had any such specialised sphere at first, though the creation of the court of superiority in 1370 possibly shifted the balance of his work.<sup>5</sup> In the fourteenth century, no less than earlier, the degree of elaboration and differentiation of seals and writing departments is the best test of state-efficiency we can apply; in the operation of seals the main executive forces of the government can be watched at work. Thus while the basic facts of the spheres of authority in Gascony are obscure as expressed in the use of seals, it must remain impossible either to understand the normal machinery

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could no longer be used, and new silver seals were ordered to be made (*E.A.* 180/1, no. 23).

<sup>1</sup> I am doubtful as to the importance of this official before 1362 (see above, p. 302). Nor do I think it certain that after 1362 his functions were as yet primarily judicial rather than administrative, or that he only became prominent and "chancellor of Aquitaine" instead of "chancellor of Gascony" after the creation of the court of superiority (*Brissaud, op. cit.* 53-54). He is certainly called chancellor of Aquitaine before that date (*e.g.* John Streatley in 1362, *M.B.E., T.R.* 278, f. 261d).

<sup>2</sup> Yet occasionally grants under the prince's great seal were subsequently confirmed by the king under his great seal, *e.g.* a grant to John Grailly, Captal de Buch, in June 1369, was confirmed by the king in April 1369 (*Foedera*, III. ii. p. 874; *Gasc.* 83 m. 8, *C.W.* 418, no. 28,281). Compare a letter under the king's great seal of April 1372, concerning the livery of certain castles recently held by Thomas of Woodstock, "notwithstanding any order from us or the prince of Aquitaine or the said Thomas or any one, by letters under the great or privy seals or by word of mouth or in any other manner" (*Gasc.* 85, m. 7).

<sup>3</sup> A grant, for instance, of Jan. 1, 1366, was inspected by the keeper of the seal for contracts in Sept. 1366 (*E.A.* 176/20, no. 31).

<sup>4</sup> *Brissaud, op. cit.* p. 53.

<sup>5</sup> Chancellors certainly exist from 1362 onwards, but none of their actual appointments survive. In April 1372, however, the king appointed the abbot of St. Maxence to be chancellor in his lordship of Aquitaine (*Gasc.* 85, m. 5), despite the fact that the Black Prince, now returned to England, still nominally held the principality. The form of this appointment certainly suggests that the chancellor's duties were primarily judicial, notably in connection with "the court of superiority."

of Gascon government as a whole, or to summarise the changes introduced into administration by the presence of the Black Prince and his personal and territorial seals.

Each part of the lord Edward's land had its established government, each its traditional customs and privileges, each its own vested interests. These can never be forgotten in considering the methods of his central government, which were conditioned by their existence, nor can a verdict be passed upon its efficiency until both central and local systems are fully understood in detail.

Sources of information about the prince's household and its offshoots fall into two main categories; each has limitations in the quality or quantity of material it offers and in the difficulties incidental to its use. On the one hand there are the actual records of the prince's government departments, both local and central; on the other there are the vast stores of national archives which may, through some accident of survival or some exceptional incident of contemporary history, contain references, often incidentally, to the lord Edward's household. The former, when they exist, carry unquestioned authority, but are too scanty and intermittent to yield continuous and comprehensive evidence; the latter, on the other hand, are too voluminous to be examined thoroughly, and information gleaned from them at random may have much or little value. The deficiencies of surviving historical materials, which make it difficult to acquire real understanding of the central institutions of the king and the nation, make it still more difficult to understand the administrative institutions of other magnates and of the localised franchises. Independence of the national government departments frequently involved a lack of systematic method in the making or preservation of records.

Local records have not been exhaustively examined for the purposes of this section except in the case of Cheshire. The ministers' accounts of the palatinate illustrate the local operation of the prince's central system, and occasionally they furnish the names of central officials. As they form a continuous series they have some real usefulness, while suffering from the limitations of



their class. The so-called "recognizance rolls," in reality enrolments of that single unit, the exchequer-chancery of the palatinate, afford frequent evidence of the activities of the earl's seals, though their business was primarily financial.<sup>1</sup> The judicial records of the palatinate, in themselves a class of peculiar interest, rarely assist our understanding of the earl of Chester's household. The financial records of Wales and Cornwall have been occasionally but not systematically inspected,<sup>2</sup> and the few surviving judicial records have not been touched. Occasional accounts of other manors in England and occasional rentals and surveys survive and have been looked at; the latter have little administrative interest. Gascon records for the period when the prince was the king's lieutenant in Gascony have small bearing on his central administration; for the period when he was prince of Aquitaine they survive only in a few exceptional cases,<sup>3</sup> notably in the accounts drawn up by Richard Fillongley.<sup>4</sup> It is curious that the prince's ministers' accounts of Chester, Wales and Cornwall have survived with comparative regularity, whereas those of Gascony have not; presumably there was less contact between the treasury of Bordeaux and the exchequer of Westminster, owing to distance and frequent political disturbances, than there was between local and national departments at home, even though such contact was unofficial in England. Moreover, even the ministers' accounts for Chester, Wales and Cornwall survive less frequently after 1362. The greater part of such scanty information as we can obtain of the prince's government in Gascony from local records must either be pieced together on the spot, or gathered by deduction from the

<sup>1</sup> In essence the recognisance rolls were not simply "chancery rolls," as has been suggested.

<sup>2</sup> It is unfortunate that the surviving ministers' accounts for Cornwall should at present be divided between the Public Record Office and the Duchy of Cornwall Office.

<sup>3</sup> Some of the Gascon accounts listed in *P.R.O. Lists and Indexes*, xxxv., for the period of the principality, are concerned with debts owing to the king before July 1362, which were still being collected, e.g. *E.A.* 177/3, account-book of Bernard de Brocas, receiver of Aquitaine (1363 and 1364). Bernard de Brocas was not an ordinary constable of Bordeaux as suggested above, iv. p. 143, but was appointed by the king as receiver to collect arrears which were due to him (*E.A.* 176/20, *Gasc.* 75, m. 2). He was still acting in July 1365 (*E.A.* 177/3). The three accounts of Richard Fillongley (*E.A.* 177/1, 177/9, 177/10) are, however, concerned with the principality, and as they were presumably never officially submitted for inspection to the national exchequer, may perhaps be classed as local accounts.

<sup>4</sup> See below, p. 365.

unfruitful evidence of such of his letters written in Gascony as are occasionally available.<sup>1</sup>

The surviving records of the prince's household organisation itself, are, of course, more instructive than any local records, though they lack continuity. Accounts of the wardrobe and household survive only for the years of the lord Edward's childhood, when his administration was well under the thumb of parental control, or when his father's absence gave him a transitory pre-eminence as "keeper of England."<sup>2</sup> A description of the furs and cloth delivered to his suite against the chills of winter,<sup>3</sup> or the account of his tailor for bed-covering and rich robes, "of diverse liveries,"<sup>4</sup> a tale of gifts to his brothers and sisters,<sup>5</sup> to his own followers,<sup>6</sup> or distinguished foreigners,<sup>7</sup> the occasional reference to childish likings<sup>8</sup> and childish games,<sup>9</sup> such details and many more give a glimpse of the background of the lord Edward's childhood. They reflect the social life of the time, they may even occasionally have some political interest.<sup>10</sup> Accounts of this nature reveal the outlines of simple domestic institutions capable of infinite development, but they are not unique, and are chiefly interesting in comparison with a host of other similar accounts of royal children. A series of accounts for a later

<sup>1</sup> For the sources of surviving letters and transcripts, see below, part ii. pp. 402-403.

<sup>2</sup> Compare, for instance, the amount of diplomatic material available for years when the duke of Cornwall was keeper of England (see below, part ii. p. 402).

<sup>3</sup> *E.A.* 388/12 (1337-38).

<sup>4</sup> For example, a robe of scarlet of the king's livery for the duke's wear at Easter, and another of the queen's livery for the same feast (*E.A.* 387/25, m. 7).

<sup>5</sup> *E.g.* venison (*E.A.* 389/6); gifts of cloth of gold were also made to the maidens and clerks of the household of the king's children at the Tower (*ib.*).

<sup>6</sup> For instance, a coat for a minstrel present with the duke during an illness (*E.A.* 387/25, m. 6), venison for the master of the household (*E.A.* 389/6).

<sup>7</sup> *E.g.* a cup of Paris workmanship to the Marquis of Juliers, the duke's uncle (*E.A.* 389/6), who also received a horse on the same occasion, specially presented to the duke by his father for that purpose (*I.R.* 313).

<sup>8</sup> Notice, for example, the very frequent references to minstrels (characteristic of the age), or to the flying of falcons before the duke (*E.A.* 389/6).

<sup>9</sup> *E.g.* ball with John Chandos.

<sup>10</sup> There is considerable information in these early accounts for writing the early life of the Black Prince. Again, as so often, the household account illustrates the story of the chronicle. For instance, it has been told how at the end of 1337, on the visit of two peace-making cardinals to England, the young duke met them and accompanied them to the king, a function of royalty not unknown in our day. In the household account we read of the cost of a velvet robe for the duke "against the coming of the cardinals" (*E.A.* 387/25, m. 7).

period of the Black Prince's life, when the small household of the boy had ripened into the centralised administrative system of the magnate, would have infinitely more value. The last account of this early series ends when Edward was at the threshold of manhood, and the only later account, a day-book of expenses in Gascony for 1355-56, is more valuable for its incidental information about the prince's doings abroad, and the financing of his military expeditions, than for details of household government.<sup>1</sup> A skeleton of his revenues from all sources towards the end of his life has a financial interest only.<sup>2</sup> And yet, as we shall see, the national exchequer did not confine its interest in the lord Edward's purse to the days of his minority, but aspired to a more enduring cognisance, of which little evidence remains.<sup>3</sup>

Infinitely more valuable than the Black Prince's accounts are the registers of his letters, which I have already described elsewhere,<sup>4</sup> and which will soon be available in print in calendar form.<sup>5</sup> One volume contains notes of letters under the prince's privy seal<sup>6</sup> concerned with the administration of his lands

<sup>1</sup> The surviving accounts of the Black Prince's household are as follows: documents relating to the account of William Hoo, keeper of the wardrobe, 1336-38 (*E.A.* 387/25); an account of William Hoo, still keeper, for cloth and fur, etc., Sept. 1337-Sept. 1338 (*ib.* 388/12); part of a roll of expenses, 1340 (*ib.* 389/6); account of Peter Gildesburgh, treasurer, Feb. 1341-Sept. 1342 (*ib.* /13); fragment of counter-roll of Ivo Glinton, controller of the wardrobe, 1341-42 (*ib.* /15); account of Peter Gildesburgh, keeper of the wardrobe, Sept. 1342-July 31, 1344, almost illegible (*ib.* 390/3); a transcript (seventeenth century) of an account of John Hale, keeper of the wardrobe, Aug. 1, 1344-May 1345 (MSS. *Harl.* 4304); a *jornale* of payments in Gascony, Sept. 1355-June 1356 (in the Duchy of Cornwall Office), cited here as Henxteworth's *Day-Book*. It is odd that this MSS. should have come to rest in the offices of the duchy. It would be a valuable source of information for estimating the prince's share in the expenses of this phase of the war, a most intricate question. I must express my gratitude to the Keeper of the Records of the Duchy for allowing me to see this account book, and also to Mr. R. L. Clowes for his kindly interest.

<sup>2</sup> *Chanc. Misc.* 9/57, see below, pp. 338-342.

<sup>3</sup> See below, pp. 338-342.

<sup>4</sup> *Essays presented to T. F. Tout*, pp. 322-325.

<sup>5</sup> I am greatly indebted to the Secretary of the Public Record Office for kindly allowing me to use part of the manuscripts of the calendars at an early stage of their preparation; this was a very substantial help. When the calendars are published it will be possible to add to the information I have utilised here. It would have been unnecessarily laborious to anticipate their appearance by extracting details, for instance, as to minor officials, manors, and so on. I can only hope that I have not overlooked much that is really significant.

<sup>6</sup> Occasional letters refer to "the seal," but this would seem to have been the same as "the privy-seal" (*Essays presented to T. F. Tout*, *loc. cit.* pp. 323-324).



between July 1346 and January 1348;<sup>1</sup> three other volumes contain letters issued between February 1351 and November 1365, and are more specialised, one dealing with Cheshire,<sup>2</sup> one with Cornwall,<sup>3</sup> one with the prince's other lands in England and the affairs of his household and other central institutions.<sup>4</sup> A fragment of a volume dealing with North Wales also survives.<sup>5</sup> The registers contain copies of all the more important instruments issued under the prince's seal—charters, writs, indentures and letters both patent and close—while notes are included of the issue of certain writs of common form such as writs of *diem clausit extremum*. Bills or other warrants to the king's chancery for the issue, for example, of letters of protection, are not registered. Long letters of instruction to local officials, warrants for payments to be made by ministers both central and local, warrants for the issue of letters under local seals, grants and letters in pursuance thereof, appointments, petitions to the prince with conciliar endorsement, such are the more important contents of the registers. Occasionally instruments under the secret seal or signet are included, also other extraneous matter such as petitions, inquisitions or memoranda of the reception of homage or fealty. Clearly the prince's secretarial office (unlike the English exchequer) kept no systematic note of incoming letters or of other matters of which permanent record was expedient, and thus his registers, like the close rolls of the English chancery, became the depository of such miscellaneous memoranda. If the prince's seal was used for some formal purpose of additional authentication to any document other than his own, a note might be made of the occasion.<sup>6</sup>

The charters and more formal letters patent,<sup>7</sup> besides letters to ecclesiastical personages, are usually written in Latin; but the majority of the entries are in French. There are indications in the first surviving register that the system of registration had not

<sup>1</sup> *M.B.E., T.R.* 144. This volume is in an advanced stage of preparation for publication, and it has been possible to check references from the proofs of calendar and index now placed in the Record Office search rooms.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* 279.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* 280.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* 278.

<sup>5</sup> *A.C.* lviii. 35 (1354–56).

<sup>6</sup> For example, on Nov. 12, 1351, when the prince placed his seal on a deed of sale of Margaret, countess of Hainault, Holland and Zealand, as did the queen of England, and some lesser German dignitaries (*M.B.E., T.R.* 280, f. 13). Oddly enough this memorandum was made in the Cornish register.

<sup>7</sup> For the diplomatic of the prince's letters, see below, part ii.

been practised for long. It is clear from a close study of these registers that both Latin and French letters were issued under the privy seal, and that the use of Latin indicated formality<sup>1</sup> and not that the letter was issued under some other seal, as has sometimes been supposed.<sup>2</sup> Contemporary usage often referred to the registers as "notes of letters . . . sent to Cornwall"<sup>3</sup> or the "notes of England;"<sup>4</sup> sometimes they are stated to contain "copies of letters of warrant."<sup>5</sup> The evidence of these letters is, of course, invaluable, and it is unfortunate that they do not survive after 1365. They cast light, however, on the middle period of the prince's life, which would otherwise, in the absence of household accounts, be very obscure. The interest of these letters is not primarily nor mainly administrative, for they touch on every side of the life of the time.<sup>6</sup> From the administrative point of view perhaps their most vital contribution is their unmistakable evidence that the prince's privy seal was his most important instrument of government.

Petitions addressed to the prince or his council are the only other class of record directly concerned with his own central system of government; a file of these survives for 1375-76.<sup>7</sup> This contains over a hundred petitions, which are occasionally, but not usually, endorsed. In themselves they are rarely of great interest; in the mass they testify to the quantities of work with which the prince had to deal, and to the importance of the council in his administrative system. These surviving petitions are all from Cornwall or England, though presumably similar files would be kept for the prince's other lands. They beg for the

<sup>1</sup> Latin letters are very rarely included in the register of letters for Cheshire, presumably because formality there was normally attained by the use of the Chester seal.

<sup>2</sup> See, for instance, the nineteenth-century description at the beginning of the Cheshire register; also above, ii. p. 80, where it is assumed that writs of both great and privy seal are contained in the earliest registers elsewhere (*ib.* 181) called a roll.

<sup>3</sup> *E.g. M.B.E., T.R.* 280 (title-page).

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* f. 56d.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* 278, f. 158d.

<sup>6</sup> The value for social and economic matters of the Cheshire register has recently been demonstrated in *Mediaeval Cheshire* by H. J. Hewitt (M.U.P., 1929).

<sup>7</sup> *Ancient Petitions*, file 333. The file contains several sub-files, viz. petitions of Michaelmas Term, 49 Edward III., endorsed and not delivered, petitions for the same term not endorsed, petitions of Easter Term, etc. A manuscript index to the names of petitioners is included in the copy of *Lists and Indexes*, i., in the Search Room of the Public Record Office, where the file is described.

prince's goodwill in all manner of affairs, as in the payment of arrears of wages, the execution of the prince's grants, the restraint of the exactions of local officials, and so on. Often they specifically ask the council that the prince's letters be issued on the petitioner's behalf. Some of them are endorsed "*soit parler a Monsieur*", which suggests that despite increasing sickness the prince could be consulted on comparatively trivial affairs, but that the council normally acted on its own initiative. The majority of the petitions are in fact addressed to the council.

The archives of the English national departments at any time may contain references to the prince's governmental system, but these are most frequent at times when there was some peculiarly close tie between father and son. Thus, when the lord Edward was a child, his "governor and administrator" had a special interest in the management of his affairs, and the chancery rolls in particular may contain orders to him, his servants or councillors. Again, when the duke of Cornwall was "keeper of England" in 1338, 1339, 1340 and 1342, the king had an exceptional interest in the councillors and system which, in name at least, were left in control of English government. Similarly, when the prince was king's lieutenant in Gascony, 1355-57, his name is frequently found in the general record sources of English history. For the last years of his life there are few such references, though the national departments were for a time concerned with the winding up of his affairs after his death. The chronicles of the period are rarely useful for administrative institutions, though the prince's life, and particularly its more sensational episodes, are there set forth with all the deference and eulogy demanded by his position.

The usefulness of the records of the various departments, as a source for the Black Prince's administrative institutions, is limited and uneven. The calendars of chancery rolls can be utilised for information about the careers of his servants and for the confirmations of his letters that they contain, more particularly after his death; though from the diplomatic point of view the actual roll is more useful than the calendar. Chancery warrants are useful for the former type of information and for their uncertain evidence about seals. The unpublished Gascon rolls contain rather more frequent references to the actual govern-



ment of the prince in Gascony, though rarely to his household, because even after the creation of the principality Edward III. continued to encourage appeals from Gascony and to intervene in its affairs when he felt so disposed. But the Gascon rolls during the years of the principality change very much in character and lose much of their normal interest. They are much smaller,<sup>1</sup> and their contents consist for the most part of protections, attorneys and so on in favour of the prince's retinue in Aquitaine, of orders to mariners about the transport of men, horses and food supplies, of mandates concerning the reserved appellate jurisdiction of the king. Appointments, normally their contribution of greatest administrative interest, are no longer included. Special collections of public records, such as ancient correspondence and ancient deeds, contain a considerable number of the prince's letters,<sup>2</sup> and also, occasionally, letters to the prince.<sup>3</sup>

The records of the English exchequer on occasion refer to the prince's household, but they are too voluminous to have been systematically explored. The prince's own exchequer was probably within the same building as the national exchequer,<sup>4</sup> and worked in close association with it, and by very similar methods. Moreover, the national exchequer made several attempts to supervise the prince's financial arrangements,<sup>5</sup> and the memoranda rolls, for example, would probably yield considerable information about its claims. I can, however, find no evidence that these claims were ever completely recognised, and thus the pipe rolls and foreign accounts are barren of information.<sup>6</sup> Issue and receipt rolls are occasionally of use. Generally, however, the Black Prince's financial arrangements in England and in Gascony are very obscure, and it is not at all impossible that information on the whole subject may crop up at any time in the

<sup>1</sup> The Gascon roll for 1361 has twelve membranes; that for 1362 has twenty-eight, and is exceptionally long; that for 1363 has only seven.

<sup>2</sup> See part ii. below.

<sup>3</sup> Volume liv. of *Ancient Correspondence*, in particular, contains a number of letters addressed to the prince.

<sup>4</sup> See below, p. 333.

<sup>5</sup> See below, pp. 338-340.

<sup>6</sup> I have examined some fourteen memoranda rolls in whole or part, and the results hardly justify the labour. I have found practically nothing of interest on the pipe rolls examined for years when the national exchequer was actively interested in the prince's affairs.

exchequer records. In my direct search for this, however, I have had little success.

It is clear, then, that by a freak of survival the household of the Black Prince as a child can be more readily studied than the household of his maturity, that his governmental institutions in the last twelve years of his life are practically unknown to us, and that his domestic organisation in Gascony and its relation to his government of the principality is even more obscure. It is truly a perverse fate which decrees what record materials shall survive.

The household of the Black Prince's early years, that is to say from his birth till 1343, was, of course, small and undeveloped, though his custody of England in 1338, 1339, 1340 and 1342, during the king's absence, gave it a short-lived and exceptional significance, and indeed makes it impossible to guess which features were permanently a part of his household, and which were rather a part of the establishment of the keeper of England as such. Like his father before him, he possessed a wardrobe and a definite income from earliest infancy,<sup>1</sup> which is perhaps somewhat surprising, since his mother, queen Philippa, had not herself been given a separate household till April 1330, two months before his birth.<sup>2</sup> Unlike his father, however, the Black Prince did not immediately receive the title of earl of Chester, though the resources of the earldom largely went to his support. His mother's influence seems to have been paramount in this early household, for his revenues were normally paid to her on his behalf, though the keeper of the wardrobe occasionally received them.<sup>3</sup> Probably, like the early household of Eleanor of

<sup>1</sup> Edward of Woodstock was born on June 15, 1330, and his wardrobe is mentioned in Sept. (*C.P.R.*, 1330-34, p. 2), when £500 was assigned to it towards the baby's expenses. Edward of Windsor, the future Edward III., was born on Nov. 12, 1312, and seems to have had a wardrobe in the following January (*E.A.* 375/3); he was granted the earldom of Chester when only twelve days old. Earlier precedents for the establishment of the heir were less hurriedly set in operation. Edward Longshanks, afterwards Edward I., probably had no wardrobe till he was about fifteen years old (see above, i. p. 256); the household and wardrobe, of which Edward of Carnarvon was a member, was not apparently allotted a definite income, and was often described as "the household of the king's children" (see *Bull. I.H.R.* II. v. p. 41; above, i. 165-166).

<sup>2</sup> *Enr. Acc. (W. and H.)* 2, m. 10.

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 289, n. 6.

Castile or Edward of Carnarvon, the household and wardrobe of the Black Prince functioned fully only when he was *extra curiam*,<sup>1</sup> the court being in this instance his mother's household. Perhaps the queen's influence had disappeared by 1335, in which year the lay and clerical chiefs of the earl's household seem to have been in sole control of the earl's person and his domestic establishment.<sup>2</sup> Throughout Edward's minority, which lasted till the conclusion of the Crécy-Calais campaign, the king at times emphasised his parental relationship by adding to his normal title the phrase "governor and administrator of Edward our firstborn."<sup>3</sup> Such an addition can have had no political significance, as it may have had on another occasion.<sup>4</sup>

For a time Edward's young sisters were part of his household,<sup>5</sup> but the arrangement did not last long.<sup>6</sup> It was indeed usual for the less important members of the king's family to live with his eldest son,<sup>7</sup> but Edward III.'s younger children—a rapidly increasing number—had soon a household of their own in the Tower of London, which certainly existed concurrently with the separate establishment of the duke of Cornwall.<sup>8</sup>

The comparative insignificance of the Black Prince's early household is shown by the undistinguished names of the early holders of its most important clerical office, that of treasurer of

<sup>1</sup> See above, ii. p. 166.

<sup>2</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1333-37, p. 523; *Foedera*, II. ii. p. 919. In this letter the king ordered that his son should be kept in safety in Nottingham castle while there was a threat of French invasion.

<sup>3</sup> *E.g. Foedera*, II. ii. p. 880 (1334); *M.R.*, *L.T.R.* 118, communia, Trinity, recorda m. 11 (1346).

<sup>4</sup> Viz. when Edward II. used it in connection with his son's lands as duke of Aquitaine in 1325, perhaps in order to justify his continued control of them in a delicate Anglo-French situation (*Pl. Edw. II.* p. 223; *Political History of England*, iii. p. 297).

<sup>5</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1330-34, p. 523 (1334); M. A. E. Green, *Lives of the Princesses of England*, iii. p. 168. The duke's fragmentary accounts show no sign that the little girls were living with him.

<sup>6</sup> Joan, the younger princess, went abroad with her mother in 1338 (*ib.* iii. p. 168), while Isabella joined the family at Ghent in 1340 (*ib.* p. 169).

<sup>7</sup> As in the households of Edward of Carnarvon and of Windsor.

<sup>8</sup> Accounts of the household of the king's children survive for 1340 and 1341 (*E.A.* 389/9, 10, 11). It is wrong to suppose (for example, B. C. Hardy, *Philippa of Hainault*, pp. 113, 117, etc.) that the duke of Cornwall was also in Flanders in 1339 and 1340 with the rest of his family. The account of the duke's expenses in England during 1340 does not seem to have been known to the author of this book, nor to Mrs. Green, whose lives of Isabella and Joan, the duke's sisters, are extraordinarily detailed and accurate (*Princesses of England*, iii.).



the household or keeper of the wardrobe. John Brunham, senior, the first of these, acted for six years,<sup>1</sup> and then became for a time chamberlain of Chester.<sup>2</sup> This was a reversal of earlier practice, when a local appointment was a stepping-stone to household office, witness the cases of William Melton and Richard Bury in the household of the first duke of Cornwall's father and grandfather.<sup>3</sup> Of William Hoo, Brunham's successor in the duke's household, little is known; he remained in office till his death in the winter of 1340-41.<sup>4</sup>

The keepers of the wardrobe were the clerical chiefs of the household, and the chief financial officers; in these early days of the household much of their time was spent in journeying from the duke's temporary dwelling-place to London to receive moneys due to the lord, to buy cloth, fur, spices, wax or provisions, to examine the tallies of lesser household officers, or to discuss the duke's affairs with other officials of the household. Between May and October 1340, William Hoo visited London on the prince's business at least six times; for part of that period, in addition, he must have been within the household in London when the duke was in residence there. Once he had to delay for sixteen days awaiting the arrival of moneys from Chester, so haphazard were financial arrangements in the immature household. Hoo had a house in London, and here armour, etc.,<sup>5</sup> of the duke was kept for a time till on Hoo's death it was removed to the house of the duke's tailor. When without the household the keeper received five shillings a day for his expenses.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For a list of the Black Prince's officials, see appendix to this section.

<sup>2</sup> Master John Brunham, senior, was apparently acting as chamberlain of Chester from June 1, 1341, if not earlier (*Recog.* 26, m. 1), was still acting in April 1342 (*Recog.* 27, m. 5d), and was soon superseded. He should not be confused with John Brunham, junior, acting as chamberlain or receiver from December 24, 1342 (Brown, p. 114), till the latter end of 1343 (*Recog.* 29, m. 1), and again for twenty years after 1346 (appointed as receiver, September 12, 1346, *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144, f. 12; acting till at least 41 Edward III., Ormerod, *History of Cheshire*, i. p. 59).

<sup>3</sup> For Melton see above, ii. p. 171; for Bury, iii. p. 25.

<sup>4</sup> I have not been able to identify this William Hoo, for the name was not uncommon, and was a source of confusion even to contemporaries; for instance, William Hoo, canon of Chichester, "recently deceased" (1342), was confused with William Hoo of Eye in Suffolk (*M.R.*, *L.T.R.* 115 communia, Mich. recorda, m. 7). A William Hoo was a member of the prince's household in 1362 (*C. Pap. Reg. Pet.* i. p. 387).

<sup>5</sup> "harnesia."

<sup>6</sup> All these facts come from *E.A.* 389/6.

The position second in importance in a royal wardrobe was usually that of the controller ; such an officer first appears in the duke of Cornwall's wardrobe in 1341. Ivo Glington, who acted as controller from then till 1344, was also, however, at the same time keeper of the seal,<sup>1</sup> a combination of offices which recalls the wardrobe of Edward I.<sup>2</sup> Glington, however, unlike these earlier controllers, seems to have been described by the name of either office. By August 1344 the two offices were separated, perhaps in consequence of increased business after Edward had become prince of Wales. In the light of the certain combination of offices in 1341 it seems not impossible that William Munden, the first keeper of the seal of whom we hear, was also controller of the household. The seal probably kept by these controllers was the duke's privy seal.<sup>3</sup> Already it was not unusual for the keepers of the seal to live outside the household of the duke. William Munden, for instance, was in London with the duke's seal for thirty-six days in the spring of 1340, and was given four shillings a day for his expenses.<sup>4</sup> His duties were now sufficiently numerous for a clerk to be employed to help him.<sup>5</sup> It is probable that the duke by now possessed a secret seal or signet to be used when the privy seal was not available, as must have frequently happened while he was keeper of England.<sup>6</sup>

So much for the chief clerical officers of the duke's wardrobe.<sup>7</sup> The earliest prominent lay official of whom we hear was William St. Omer, his steward, in turn succeeded by Robert Bilkemore and Edmund Kendal.<sup>8</sup> Their recorded doings are also mainly peripatetic. Bilkemore received five shillings a day when without the household ; he was not too great a man, however, to be sent some sixteen miles from Langley to Dunstable and back in a day, to carry fifty marks due from the prince for the purchase of the

<sup>1</sup> See appendix to this section.

<sup>2</sup> See above, ii. p. 37.

<sup>3</sup> For the secretarial arrangements of the Black Prince see pp. 367-382.

<sup>4</sup> *E.A.* 389/6. Glington similarly was outside the household for seventeen days in Jan. 1341, and received the same allowance (*ib.*).

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.*

<sup>6</sup> See later, p. 381.

<sup>7</sup> The office of cofferer perhaps existed before 1340 (see below, p. 328), but was not important.

<sup>8</sup> See appendix. For William St. Omer's wife Elizabeth, see later, p. 319. William was given the manor of Wisley, Surrey, for life in 1356 (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 109).

manor of Wisley.<sup>1</sup> Other journeys taken by the steward were to Cornwall to report on diverse matters to the duke and his council, to Salisbury bearing letters from the king to his son, to various places to discuss business, pay creditors, supervise purchases, hold courts,<sup>2</sup> deliver gaols, and so on.<sup>3</sup>

Although the steward of the household and the keeper of the wardrobe are the first recorded officials of the prince, they are not the most important permanent officials of his household in the early stage of its development. There was, in addition, an officer called the master of the household whose status was superior to theirs. The precise functions of his office are, however, obscure, for the master was more often referred to by name than by his official designation. Thus in 1340 we find that summer clothes were bought for the duke of Cornwall himself, for the earl of Arundel and for Nicholas de la Beche; that the keeper of the wardrobe and the steward of the household went to London "to discuss and treat of the lord's business" with the same Nicholas on several occasions; that Nicholas de la Beche was given venison of the duke's gift at the same time as the royal children; and that letters were frequently delivered to him by the duke's messengers, as also were moneys on one occasion towards the cost of repairs of the duke's castle of Berkhamsted.<sup>4</sup> His expenses outside the court on the duke's business were paid him for 83 days, at the rate of 13s. 4d. per day, and his name is placed first amongst the witnesses of the duke's letters.<sup>5</sup> Thus he was obviously a person of much importance in the household. Only once is Nicholas de la Beche definitely called master of the household; on this occasion he ordered the payment of the steward of the household's fee.<sup>6</sup> His

<sup>1</sup> On Jan. 2, 1340, Bilkemore went from Langley to Dunstable to discuss the purchase of this Surrey manor, then in the possession of "the daughter of Payn." On Jan. 4 he again went to Dunstable carrying 50 marks to the same lady from the duke (*E.A.* 389/6). See later, p. 358, for further particulars about Wisley while in the Black Prince's hands.

<sup>2</sup> On one occasion Kendal was assigned to hear pleas of the *aula* of the king at Malmesbury.

<sup>3</sup> Details from *E.A.* 389/6.

<sup>4</sup> See *E.A.* 389/6.

<sup>5</sup> *E.g. C.P.R.*, 1340-43, p. 19 (July 23, 1340); *ib.* p. 181 (Feb. 1339). Compare a letter of Nov. 16, 1347, where the name of Burghersh, probably still master, comes second, after that of Ralph, baron of Stafford (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144, f. 133d).

<sup>6</sup> The payment was made "per preceptum et ordinacionem domini Nicholai de la Beche magistri hospicii dieti domini ducis" (*E.A.* 389/6 m. 4).



successor Bartholomew Burghersh was likewise visited in London by the steward of the household; he authorised the payment of an allowance to the keeper of the seal for his expenses when without the household;<sup>1</sup> later he sent letters to Edward, then prince of Wales, certifying him of the vacancy of a church in his gift,<sup>2</sup> and so on. He was the most conspicuous member of the prince's council,<sup>3</sup> and was sent to England to hurry reinforcements during the siege of Calais.<sup>4</sup>

The masters of the household were certainly of pre-eminent importance in the household of the Black Prince, but their precise functions are elusive and cannot be defined by the aid of any comparison. Such an office was by no means unique, but has not, I think, as yet been fully discussed in print.<sup>5</sup> It was normally held by a knight of some age and standing, and was analogous to an equally obscure office, that of "mistress of the household."<sup>6</sup> Young girls of high birth were sometimes still in the care of such a mistress even in their teens.<sup>7</sup> Even boys might for a time have such a guardian; Elizabeth St. Omer, the wife of the Black Prince's first steward of the household, seems to have taken charge

<sup>1</sup> *E.A.* 389/6.

<sup>2</sup> *M.A.* 1241/13.

<sup>3</sup> The prince adjourned the Chester county court "by advice of his dear master Bartholomew Burghersh and others of his council" (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144, f. 14d, 1346); certain business was agreed on "by our master, . . . in the presence of the archbishop of Canterbury and others of the prince's council" (Apr. 1347, *ib.* f. 60); the commitment of an office was made "by counsel of Sir William Shareshull, Sir Roger Hillary and others of the council, and afterwards by the assent of the prince himself and Sir Bartholomew Burghersh." (Nov. 1347, *ib.* f. 128d).

<sup>4</sup> Burghersh was abroad with the king on July 29, 1346 (*ib.* f. 5d), and in England on Sept. 12 (*ib.* f. 12d), and due to leave soon after Sept. 18 (*ib.* f. 14d). Another journey to England was apparently contemplated in March (*ib.* f. 54d), and he was at Westminster in April (*ib.* f. 50).

<sup>5</sup> The office is not mentioned in vols. i. and ii. of this work in connection with children's households under Edward I. and II. But see iii. p. 330-331 for the masters of Richard II., also *ib.* p. 331, n. 1, about the office in general. Professor Johnstone regards the *magister* or *magistra* as a normal part of the household of children of rank ("The Wardrobe and Household Accounts of the sons of Edward I.," *Bull. I.H.R.* II. v. 40). The position of master was very similar to that indefinable but responsible office filled by Geoffrey Pitchford in the household of Henry, son of Edward I. (*Bull. J.R.L.* vii. p. 387). The office of master of the household occurred also in the household of St. Louis of Toulouse and his brothers (Margaret R. Toynbee, *St. Louis of Toulouse*, p. 39).

<sup>6</sup> *E.g.* Green, *Princesses of England*, vols. ii. and iii. *passim*.

<sup>7</sup> See above, iii. p. 331, n. 1. Philippa of Lancaster was nineteen in 1379, when Katherine Swynford was the mistress of herself and her sister.

of the baby lord in 1332<sup>1</sup> and was called mistress of the king's children in 1334.<sup>2</sup> It seems probable that the master of the household succeeded this semi-governess, semi-nurse, when the king's son had outgrown the necessity for solely female ministrations. The "*magister*" is first so named in 1340, though the office was almost certainly in existence earlier;<sup>3</sup> I have found no reference to it after 1347.<sup>4</sup> But the later "governor of the prince's business" held an analogous position with a still more comprehensive sphere of activity.<sup>5</sup>

Both Nicholas de la Beche and Bartholomew Burghersh were knights, as the position of master demanded. Beche had previously been deputy-marshal of England,<sup>6</sup> and was twice appointed to hear trespasses within the verge of the duke of Cornwall's household as keeper of England;<sup>7</sup> for six years, including the period when he was master of the duke of Cornwall's household, he was probably also constable of the Tower of London, and he was apparently removed from both offices, together with even more illustrious persons, soon after Edward III.'s unexpected return from Flanders in November 1340.<sup>8</sup> Once at least

<sup>1</sup> Green, *op. cit.* iii. p. 166.

<sup>2</sup> Elizabeth then received a present of glass from the city of London; the earl and his sisters also received presents from the city while they were staying in the Tower that year, 1334 (Riley, *Memorials of London*, pp. 189, 190). In 1338 Elizabeth was rewarded for her services to the duke (*C.C.R.*, 1337-39, p. 455), and both she and William were still receiving payments for their good services in 1346 (*I.R.* 338).

<sup>3</sup> Nicholas de la Beche is the first witness of letters of the duke in February 1339, and was therefore probably then the master of the household (*C.P.R.*, 1340-43, p. 181). He also appears among the more important recipients of winter clothing in 1337-38, and was certainly already a prominent member of the duke's council (*E.A.* 388/12).

<sup>4</sup> See appendix.

<sup>5</sup> See below, p. 388. Nicholas de la Beche, the prince's master, was described as having been in the past "governor of the prince's affairs," some six years after he had ceased to hold the position of master of the household (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144, f. 95).

<sup>6</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1338-40, pp. 162 and 185.

<sup>7</sup> *Ib.*; also *C.P.R.*, 1340-43, p. 89.

<sup>8</sup> *Ib.* p. 110 (Jan. 13, 1341). He was apparently still master of the duke's household in Dec. 1340 (*E.A.* 389/6), but was succeeded by Burghersh before the end of Jan. 1341 (see appendix, also see above, iii. p. 121). It is not clear from the calendars of chancery rolls how many men of the name "Nicholas de la Beche" there were at this time, but probably all references are to the same man. For instance, we know that the master of the duke of Cornwall's household had letters addressed to him in July 1340 when he was at Beams, "la Beche" and Watlington (*E.A.* 389/6). A Nicholas de la Beche had licence to crenellate the dwelling-places of his manors at these places in 1338 (*C.P.R.*, 1338-40, p. 24). This same Nicholas was granted Harwell

his personal ambitions led to his neglect of the prince's interests.<sup>1</sup> Bartholomew Burghersh the elder had had much experience in the king's service, and in 1341 was keeper of the forests south of Trent, though also the prince's master.<sup>2</sup> In 1344 the Black Prince granted Burghersh senior the stannary in Devon, both as a reward for services rendered "in attendance upon the prince's body as on other matters affecting the increase of his estate," and also for his fee "that he may the more effectively attend on the direction of the prince's counsels." He was not, however, to be bound too closely to the prince's service, but to be free "to attend to pilgrimage and other duties whether to God or to the king as shall seem fit to him."<sup>3</sup> Burghersh's butler, Henry of Berkhamsted was granted the office of porter of the castle of Berkhamsted by the prince in recognition of "the great diligence and labour which Sir Bartholomew has long expended on the good government of the prince's person and lordships."<sup>4</sup>

The only other ministers of any importance who are mentioned, with the name of their position, in these early household accounts, are the auditors, the keeper of the fees, and the steward of the prince's lands. The duties of these officials, if not their actual responsibilities, were much the same as those of their later successors, and require no separate treatment. James of Woodstock, steward of lands in 1337-38, is one of the few officials designated by the name of his office in the accounts for that year.<sup>5</sup>

(Berks) in the same year (*ib.* p. 53). Elsewhere it is clear that Sir Nicholas de la Beche held Beams and Harwell before 1337 (*C.C.R.*, 1337-39, pp. 259, 260). The constable of the Tower seems also to have been a knight though he was not usually so-called (*C.P.R.*, 1334-38, p. 567). The identification of the constable of the Tower with the master of the household is then a probability, if not a certainty. For the lands of Nicholas see *Cal. Inq.* viii. no. 574 (1345).

<sup>1</sup> When Nicholas seized the Berkshire manor of "Upledecoumbe" in the honour of Wallingford (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144, f. 95).

<sup>2</sup> *E.g.* *C.P.R.*, 1340-43, pp. 6, 322, 510. His son, of the same name, must not be confused with him. Bartholomew the younger was in the prince's service by 1347, and was later a member of his council (*e.g.* 1357, *C. Pap. Reg. Pet.* i. p. 292). It is clear that it was Bartholomew the elder who was the prince's master (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144, f. 129). For an account of both father and son, see *D.N.B.*

<sup>3</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1343-45, p. 261 (May 10, 1344). Burghersh was subsequently the king's chamberlain; in 1351 his vow to go to the Holy Sepulchre and fight for two years against the enemies of the faith was still unfulfilled (*C. Pap. Reg. Pet.* i. p. 207).

<sup>4</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144, f. 129 (5 Nov. 1347).

<sup>5</sup> *E.A.* 388/12.



John Wendover, clerk of the offices of the household,<sup>1</sup> and William Stratton, tailor,<sup>2</sup> are names of minor importance which appear, and there were, of course, in addition, a host of lesser household servants, valets of the chamber, esquires, clerks of the buttery, larder, scullery, marshalsea, etc., falconers, armourers, messengers of different degree, porters, bakers and so on, who had, however, no administrative significance.

At the other end of the household ladder were the important persons allotted by the king to advise the duke, and in effect to carry on his government. Like all similar bodies, this council was ill-defined and fluctuating both in functions and in membership; during his childhood it must have had complete command of all his business. Its personnel was the medium through which the king's control of the duke's affairs was most conveniently expressed. Members of the council are rarely so described, but it is probable that in the winter of 1337-38 the earls of Salisbury, Huntingdon and Suffolk, were included in that body, besides Nicholas de la Beche, Henry Ferrers, John Pulteney, Reynold Cobham, William Shreshull and John Stonor, justices.<sup>3</sup> Membership of the council, however, is not likely, as yet, to have been a very exacting or continuous labour, and could be combined with more strenuous activities. About the time the duke was appointed as keeper of the realm, in May 1340, the earl of Arundel would seem to have still been a member of the council,<sup>4</sup> though he went with the king overseas in June.<sup>5</sup> When the duke was regent his council became virtually a branch of the king's council and was responsible for the successful conduct of the home administration. At such times it was naturally strengthened by additions to its personnel. Thus in 1338 the earls of Huntingdon and Arundel and Ralph Neville were appointed as members of the council of the duke, as keeper of the realm;<sup>6</sup> in 1340,

<sup>1</sup> *E.A.* 389/6 (1340).

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* also 388/12 (1337-38).

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* 388/12, an account of liveries of fur and cloth to diverse persons in the duke's service, for the winter season 1337-38. Some of the recipients of clothing must have had a somewhat slight connection with the duke's affairs, as for instance John of Saint-Pol, clerk of chancery, and Gervase Wilford, clerk of exchequer. The former was a prominent chancery official in the next few years (Wilkinson, *Chancery*, p. 156); the latter had already seen considerable service in the exchequer and was to become chief baron by 1350 (see below, pp. 336-337).

<sup>4</sup> *E.A.* 389/6; here he is given material for summer wear at the duke's expense.

<sup>5</sup> *D.N.B.*

<sup>6</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1338-40, p. 112 (1338, July 13). Also see above, iii. p. 84.

first the earl of Huntingdon and later archbishop Stratford, Henry Percy, Thomas Wake, Ralph Neville and William Beauchamp were similarly appointed.<sup>1</sup>

Most of the features of the early household of the duke which we have just examined were also present in the administrative system of the prince. Councillors, stewards of the household and of lands, keepers and controllers of the wardrobe, keepers of the seal and of fees, auditors, clerks and minor officials—all were common to both. In the possession of a “master of the household,” however, the early household of the duke differed from the household of his maturity. Though the early household acquired at times a transitory political importance as the centre of English administration during the king’s absence, it was as yet normally a rather imperfect domestic machine, capable however of performing more extensive functions when it had been overhauled and readjusted in various ways.

The financial organisation of the administrative system of the prince of Wales was more intricate than that of his household as duke of Cornwall. Perhaps the most glaring defect of the duke of Cornwall’s early household had been the lack of any permanent headquarters in London. This was remedied while he was regent in 1338 by the king’s suggestion that the duke should remain at the Tower, subject to his council’s approval.<sup>2</sup> During his later keeperships no such course was pursued. The duke normally lived in turn at his various manors in the home counties, and thence his ministers went on business trips to town. It was not necessarily convenient for his treasurer, for example, to make frequent journeys to London to receive the moneys due to him, and to remain there until the accountant from distant parts happened to turn up.<sup>3</sup> Probably in theory such payments should have been made at the wardrobe, wherever the duke was, at regular terms; in practice they were usually paid in London, and there was some latitude in the interpretation of these terms.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See above, iii. p. 112.

<sup>2</sup> See above, iii. p. 82.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. above, p. 316.

<sup>4</sup> Thus in 1340 payments from Chester were received in August (*E.A.* 389/6), in 1342 in September: in the latter financial year six liveries of money were made (*Brown*, p. 117), a not unusual number.

The difficulties which confronted the treasurer were intensified by the gradual extension of the lord Edward's interests; only the provision of a central office with a permanent official in charge could solve such difficulties. It was not long before this solution was adopted.

In November 1343 the king took steps to ensure that the prince's financial officials should not neglect their business at "the prince's exchequer." Farmers, bailiffs and other ministers of Edward prince of Wales had refused to make payments, answer for their farms and other issues, or to render accounts at this exchequer.<sup>1</sup> A chamberlain of Wales was, however, appointed in May 1343 to account as of old at the wardrobe.<sup>2</sup> Thus the prince's exchequer was apparently set up some time between May and November 1343,<sup>3</sup> presumably in consequence of the grant to the lord Edward of the principality of Wales in May. This administrative innovation was at first unpopular among the prince's officials, and was perhaps boycotted, but by the late autumn of 1344 it would seem to have been in full working order. Certainly throughout 1343 and 1344 payments were still made by local accountants to the keeper of the wardrobe.<sup>4</sup> On November 17, 1344, however, such sums were paid to a new official, "the keeper of the prince's exchequer at Westminster,"<sup>5</sup> and he received wages from the preceding 1st August as "keeper of the exchequer of the lord prince and receiver of the moneys of the same."<sup>6</sup> Perhaps the appointment to this office of Peter Gildesburgh, already experienced in the financial affairs of both king and duke, restored confidence; at any rate no more is heard of refusal to account to the exchequer.

<sup>1</sup> *M.R.*, *K.R.* 121 (brevia directa baronibus, Trinity m. 19d), a writ of great seal dated Nov. 30. Cf. *M.R.*, *L.T.R.* 117 (communia Easter, m. 5d), a writ of privy seal of Nov. 16, which also refers to the prince's exchequer.

<sup>2</sup> *M.A.* 1213/16, m. 1d.

<sup>3</sup> I can find no reference to the beginning of this exchequer in the memoranda rolls for 1343.

<sup>4</sup> *E.g.* liveries from the escheator of Chester were made to the wardrobe in May and Sept. 1343 (*M.A.* 1241/13), and similar liveries were made from Cornish revenues throughout 1344 until Oct. 25 (*M.A.* 812/2, m. 2d). This last was made to Peter Gildesburgh, described as keeper of the wardrobe, though he had ceased to hold that office on July 30 previously, and was then keeper of the prince's exchequer (see appendix).

<sup>5</sup> *M.A.* 1221/5 (accounts of the chamberlain of S. Wales).

<sup>6</sup> *MSS. Harl.* 4304, f. 17d. He was paid 5s. a day, except for certain days when he was within the household.



The first keeper of the prince's exchequer was well qualified for his position. He knew the traditions and procedure of the royal exchequer, and could be trusted to propitiate that department's more conservative officials and to further the king's interests by modelling the duke's financial reforms on similar lines. He had already had occasion to acquire some insight into the life of those local accountants whose supervision was, in future, to rest with him. He had seen service abroad in the retinue of Bartholomew Burghersh senior, steward of Ponthieu,<sup>1</sup> and, at his request, became a canon of Abbeville in 1334 ;<sup>2</sup> in the same year he is described as a king's clerk.<sup>3</sup> For a short time he was chief weigher of the king's exchequer,<sup>4</sup> and is found in the duke of Cornwall's service early in 1341. The date is significant, for about the same time Bartholomew Burghersh senior, his patron, became master of the duke's household. From February 1341 until July 31, 1344, Gildesburgh was keeper or treasurer of the lord Edward's household ;<sup>5</sup> during this period he was also, for a time, controller of the stannary of Cornwall.<sup>6</sup> As the prince's most prominent financial official in July 1344, he was the natural person to execute reforms in his financial affairs, if indeed he was not also responsible for their initiation. It is clear that he resigned his headship of the wardrobe after the setting up of the prince's exchequer.

Gildesburgh was the first and last official to bear the title of keeper of the prince's exchequer, and his successors were known as receivers or receivers-general. Gildesburgh, too, had for a time borne the title of " receiver of all moneys arising from the issues of our lands,"<sup>7</sup> but he was discharged from this office in April 1346 because he had been allotted more important duties on the eve of the prince's departure for France.<sup>8</sup> He continued, however, to be

<sup>1</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1330-34, p. 194.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* p. 517.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.*, 1334-38, p. 54.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.*, 1340-43, p. 72 (Dec. 22, 1340). Gildesburgh was admitted to the office of chief weigher of the exchequer on Jan. 22, 1341. I am indebted to Dr. D. M. Broome for this fact. His appointment by the duke of Cornwall on May 24, 1342, as controller of the stannary of Cornwall, was only confirmed by the king on his surrender of the office of weigher (*C.P.R.*, 1340-43, p. 459).

<sup>5</sup> See appendix.

<sup>6</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1340-43, p. 459.

<sup>7</sup> Above, p. 324. Cf. *M.A.* 1221/5, m. 5 ; *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144, f. 17d.

<sup>8</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144, f. 17d. Gildesburgh was then given "diverses grosses et chargeantes busoignes."

called keeper of the exchequer till late in 1347, if not for longer.<sup>1</sup> His activities were multifarious, and it is impossible to say how much of his importance was due to his financial position. In March 1347, while the prince was still abroad, Gildesburgh was also called "one of our general attorneys, our chief auditor of accounts, and controller of our receiver."<sup>2</sup> Thus his relations with his successor as receiver are not easy to determine; it seems more probable that "controller" is here used in its old sense, as a superior officer, and not according to the established usage of the household, where it certainly implied inferiority of status.<sup>3</sup> As a member of the prince's council, Gildesburgh visited Cheshire in 1347 and 1348, and there he transacted business of many kinds;<sup>4</sup> in the first instance his clerk John Cory acted as his *locum tenens* at Westminster.<sup>5</sup> For a time in 1346-47, moreover, he seems to have kept the prince's seal at Westminster during his absence abroad, and he was certainly one of the officials responsible for the government of the prince's lands at the same period.<sup>6</sup> Subsequently he is described as "governor of the prince's lands," and as his councillor;<sup>7</sup> he went to Avignon as the prince's envoy to the pope in 1349.<sup>8</sup> His active service to the prince ended soon after, but he was treated with all honour for his remaining years.<sup>9</sup>

Gildesburgh was removed from the office of receiver to give him leisure for other and more urgent business. The demands of

<sup>1</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144, f. 131d (Nov. 12, 1347). Gildesburgh certainly rendered one account as receiver (date unspecified, *C.P.R.*, 1367-70, p. 62).

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* 144, f. 52d.

<sup>3</sup> See above, i. p. 247-248; ii. pp. 17 and 35.

<sup>4</sup> *E.g.* Brown, p. 125.

<sup>5</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144, f. 24.

<sup>6</sup> See below, p. 394.

<sup>7</sup> *C. Pap. Reg. Pet.* i. p. 156. (See below, p. 390.)

<sup>8</sup> *Ib.* also pp. 154, 207. Gildesburgh is still called the prince's envoy in 1351, and is described as a pilgrim in 1350 (*C.C.R.*, 1349-54, p. 272).

<sup>9</sup> Gildesburgh surrendered the controllership of the stannary in Nov. 1347 (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144, f. 129). After his return from abroad he took no part in the prince's administration, but received gifts from time to time (*e.g.* *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 280, f. 9 (1351)) when he went into residence as a canon of Exeter. Gildesburgh's ecclesiastical preferment was considerable. At one time or another he was granted a canonry and prebend of Lichfield (*C. Pap. Reg. Pet.* i. p. 178, 1349), subsequently exchanged (*ib.* p. 299, 1357), the archdeaconry of Totnes, and a canonry and prebend of Exeter (*ib.* p. 156), a canonry and prebend of Salisbury and of Southwell (*ib.* p. 207, 1351), canonries and prebends of Lincoln, Bangor and Penryn, and the church of Washingborough, of which he resigned Bangor (*ib.* p. 294, 1357). He also, perhaps, held a canonry of Tamworth (*ib.* p. 299, 1357). He was certainly still alive in 1357, possibly in 1361 (*ib.* p. 378), but was "lately dead" in 1367 (*C.P.R.*, 1367-70, p. 62).

the French expedition and the provision of an adequate government in the absence of the prince and many of his officials, caused considerable rearrangements at home, and led to successive changes in exchequer personnel during the summer and autumn of 1346. For two months <sup>1</sup> William Norwell combined the office of receiver, or chief receiver, as it was occasionally called,<sup>2</sup> with that of keeper of the wardrobe, but was soon succeeded as receiver by John Pirye,<sup>3</sup> and henceforth exchequer and wardrobe remained permanently separate. Pirye had considerable experience of the prince's local financial offices; he had been chamberlain of Chester,<sup>4</sup> chamberlain of North and South Wales,<sup>5</sup> and receiver of Cornwall, and continued to hold this latter office while he was chief receiver of all the prince's moneys.<sup>6</sup> But he was soon superseded, because he was so constantly occupied in Cornwall, Wales and elsewhere that he could not devote himself to the immediate problem of forwarding victuals to the prince in France.<sup>7</sup> In November 1346 Peter Lacy was appointed his successor as receiver, to stay continually in London, and to be ready to receive commands from abroad and forward requisitions.<sup>8</sup> Pirye's career of usefulness was by no means at an end; he continued to be receiver of Cornwall for some time,<sup>9</sup> was a member of the prince's council<sup>10</sup> and visited Cheshire as a councillor and auditor.<sup>11</sup>

Peter Lacy had been a clerk in the duke of Cornwall's household as early as 1337-38.<sup>12</sup> He was sent outside the household to

<sup>1</sup> Viz. from April 6, 1346, until June or July 1346.

<sup>2</sup> *M.R.*, *K.R.* 122.

<sup>3</sup> See appendix for list of receivers.

<sup>4</sup> Pirye was chamberlain of Chester after April 1, 1337 (*Recog.* 24, m. 1), and was still acting in the winter of 1340-41 (*Recog.* 26, m. 2).

<sup>5</sup> *E.g.* Pirye accounted for North Welsh revenues from May 12, 1343 (*M.A.* 1213/16), until April 3, 1345 (*M.A.* 1214/3); for those of South Wales from Michaelmas 1344-June 4, 1345 (*M.A.* 1221/5).

<sup>6</sup> *E.g.* Pirye was acting as receiver of Cornwall in Oct. 1346 (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144, f. 18).

<sup>7</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144, f. 27d.

<sup>8</sup> *Ib.* (Nov. 12). Money for the purchase of victuals was to be paid over by Pirye to Lacy to suffice for his needs "until they be both together and Sir Peter has received the charge of the said office." This was only a temporary measure, and Pirye continued to be called receiver after its date (*e.g. ib.* f. 29); Lacy was formally appointed some six weeks later (*ib.* f. 33). As Pirye was still receiver of Cornwall his absences from London are easily accounted for, and occasioned delay in the surrender of his office. See also below, pp. 350-351.

<sup>9</sup> *E.g.* he was still acting in July 1347 (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144, f. 86).

<sup>10</sup> *Ib.* f. 145 (Dec. 9, 1347).

<sup>11</sup> *E.g.* Brown, p. 120.

<sup>12</sup> Lacy then received cloth for his winter clothes (*E.A.* 388/12).



pay debtors and buy spices in 1340,<sup>1</sup> was a clerk of the wardrobe in 1341,<sup>2</sup> and visited Cornwall by order of the council in 1344-45.<sup>3</sup> He may have been cofferer of the wardrobe before 1340.<sup>4</sup> From such humble beginnings he not only won his way to a pre-eminent position in the Black Prince's administration, but his long service and efficiency were recognised by the king himself, when in 1367 he was made a king's notary and keeper of the king's privy seal.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless he continued to serve the prince as receiver-general, and held that office in all for some twenty-five years. For most of that time he was also keeper of the prince's great wardrobe,<sup>6</sup> and was once described as his secretary.<sup>7</sup> His ecclesiastical advancement was not commensurate with his services.<sup>8</sup> His position in the prince's service was confirmed by the king in 1350, when he was recognised as the prince's attorney "to receive all the moneys of his demesne lands and all the money due to him."<sup>9</sup> He was the foremost figure in the administration of home affairs after the prince's departure for Aquitaine in 1363, and was responsible for the collection of English revenues and their distribution to an overpressed and exacting master. In all probability he finally fell victim to the critics of the government in 1371, and was removed from his positions in the service of both father and son.<sup>10</sup>

Lacy's only successor as receiver-general was Alan Stokes, also an experienced financial servant of the prince, though he was much less conspicuous than Lacy. He was not important amongst the prince's servants before the 'fifties,<sup>11</sup> but was abroad with him in Gascony in 1355 and 1356.<sup>12</sup> He served the prince in Aquitaine after 1362,<sup>13</sup> and he became for a time treasurer of the household,<sup>14</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *E.A.* 389/6.

<sup>2</sup> *M.A.* 812/2.

<sup>3</sup> *MSS. Harl.* 4304.

<sup>4</sup> In 1347 there is a reference to Lacy's seal when he was cofferer of William Hoo, keeper of the wardrobe (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144, f. 141).

<sup>5</sup> See above, iii. p. 253.

<sup>6</sup> See below, p. 352.

<sup>7</sup> See below, p. 379. Lacy was an auditor of the prince's wardrobe accounts in 1358 (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 149) and 1362 (*ib.* f. 227d).

<sup>8</sup> I can add nothing to the details given above, p. 44.

<sup>9</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1349-54, p. 240.

<sup>10</sup> See above, iii. p. 275. Lacy was still acting as receiver-general on March 13, 1371, but was succeeded by Alan Stokes by Jan. 1372. I cannot, unfortunately, discover who was acting during the interval. In Jan. 1372, Stokes is referred to as being receiver "immediately after" Lacy (*M.A.* 772/6, *ib.* 7).

<sup>11</sup> But see above, iv. p. 385, n. 1.

<sup>12</sup> Henxteworth's *Day Book*.

<sup>13</sup> Stokes received a protection in Sept. 1362 (*Gasc.* 75, m. 4) and appointed attorneys in Oct. (*ib.* m. 3).

<sup>14</sup> See appendix.

and was subsequently treasurer of Aquitaine.<sup>1</sup> He also became one of the prince's executors.<sup>2</sup> His experience fitted him for responsible administrative work, and under Richard II. he became keeper of the great wardrobe.<sup>3</sup> He was dean of St. Asaph in 1376,<sup>4</sup> and subsequently received a prebend of Lincoln.<sup>5</sup> Despite some evidence to the contrary, I think the Alan Stokes who was receiver must have been the clerk of that name,<sup>6</sup> and not the knight, of whose separate identity I can find little evidence.

The office of prince's receiver originated with the setting up of the prince's exchequer, but in its early days it was also closely associated with arrangements for the successful prosecution of the French war, and apparently retained the supreme responsibility for the forwarding of victuals abroad for the greater part of the prince's lifetime. Yet the position of receiver-general, a title which soon superseded that of "receiver of the moneys arising from all our lands and issues,"<sup>7</sup> was primarily of financial importance, as Lacy's terms of appointment show. He was appointed by the prince as "receiver of all the moneys arising from the issues of all our lands and profits, both in Wales and Cornwall, and our counties of Chester and Flint, as elsewhere in England, and also from our coinage of Cornwall," which were delivered through the various local financial officers "and all others who ought to answer to our exchequer at Westminster."<sup>8</sup> But Lacy was not only the chief officer of the receipt, he undoubtedly made payments also, for example to the chief ministers of the prince's central administration; for a time such payments were made by view of his controller,<sup>9</sup> but after Gildesburgh ceased

<sup>1</sup> Stokes rendered an account for the year 1369 (*E.A.* 179/8) and had ceased to act by, at any rate, July 1371, when his successor, John Carleton, was treasurer (Delpit, p. 180).

<sup>2</sup> See below, p. 397. It is clear from *Gasc.* 93, m. 6, that it was Alan Stokes, clerk, not Alan Stokes, knight, who held this position (see above, iv. p. 385, n. 1).

<sup>3</sup> See above, iv. p. 385.

<sup>4</sup> Le Neve, *Fasti*, i. p. 82.

<sup>5</sup> (*Ib.*) ii. p. 155 (1387). This prebend of Lincoln was exchanged for a prebend of Durham in 1393 (*ib.*).

<sup>6</sup> See, for example, *C. Ch. R.* v. p. 241. But also above, iv. p. 385, n. 1.

<sup>7</sup> Throughout the Black Prince's register for 1346 and 1347 (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144) Lacy is called "receiver of the moneys arising from all our lands and issues." This register ends in Jan. 1348. In Feb. 1348, however, he seems to have been called receiver-general (*Transcripts, M.A.* vol. i. no. 3, Duchy of Cornwall) and henceforward was generally known by that title. An occasional variant was "recciver in the exchequer of Westminster" (*ib.* vii. 3).

<sup>8</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144, f. 33.

<sup>9</sup> *Ib.* f. 52d, cf. *ib.* 278, f. 150d.

to act the receiver's controller disappears from view. Thus Lacy was in effect the prince's chief treasurer. Despite the importance of his position, he received a fee of only forty marks a year.<sup>1</sup> The office of receiver-general was by no means peculiar to the prince's administrative system, but was characteristic of the baronial or subordinate household.<sup>2</sup>

In the absence of Lacy's accounts either as receiver-general or as keeper of the great wardrobe, some indication of a part of his expenditure on the prince's behalf can be obtained from schedules of payments authorised by the prince's letters of warrant and therefore included in the prince's registers.<sup>3</sup> It is not, however, always clear in which of his capacities Lacy disbursed these sums. Payments to messengers, minstrels, clerks of the chapel, gifts to the king's officials of chancery, exchequer, or law courts, or to master mariners who had served the prince, the price of victuals, the cost of journeys, the ransom of a valet of the poultry taken prisoner, liveries to the prince's or his wife's chamber, and so on, are items which might equally well have been met by the wardrobe of the household, and show how the functions of exchequer and wardrobe tended to overlap.<sup>4</sup> Other items, such as the cost of new clothes for officials of the household or the clerks of the chapel, works at the great wardrobe, saddlery for the prince or his servants, a litter for his wife, payments for ostrich feathers for "the jousts of Smithfield,"<sup>5</sup> these were perhaps made by Lacy as head of the great wardrobe. Other sums he paid are reminiscent of chamber expenditure; for instance, those spent on pearls and other jewelry or given as alms, often to the four orders of friars, or the cost of making a secret seal with the prince's *armes de penne*s. After 1362 large payments were made to the constable of Bordeaux or the keeper of the wardrobe in Gascony; there was, throughout, expenditure on many

<sup>1</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144, f. 33 (Dec. 1346). In April Lacy was allowed an additional £20 for one year "in consideration of his great costs and labours in performing his office to the prince's profit" (*ib.* f. 57).

<sup>2</sup> See above iv. p. 260. Compare *E.H.R.* xlii. p. 183, n. 4, in an article by Professor J. F. Baldwin on "The Household Administration of Henry Lacy and Thomas of Lancaster."

<sup>3</sup> For example, *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, ff. 130d, 162, 220d, 232, 267d. It is odd that no such schedules, either on behalf of the receiver or the treasurer of the household, appear in the prince's earliest surviving register for 1346 and 1347.

<sup>4</sup> See also below, p. 348.

<sup>5</sup> In 1359.



miscellaneous items, such as glass for the windows of the prince's house in Calais, glorious with escutcheons of the arms of England. In addition there must have been many items of wages and so on for which no especial warrant from the prince was required. Mediaeval man was not systematic in his differentiation between different kinds of expenditure, and did not carry his rough-and-ready distinctions very far; the payments made by the prince's receiver-general illustrate this truth much more forcibly than they indicate the financial responsibilities of his exchequer. When the prince's registers are accessible in print a more complete survey of the prince's expenditure will be possible, but it is unlikely to furnish any hard-and-fast distinctions between the financial obligations of his various administrative organs.

The exchequer set up in 1343-44 remained the prince's most important financial office for the rest of his life. It eclipsed but did not abolish the older financial organisation of the wardrobe, for the latter was mobile, and a convenient treasury for a wandering master.<sup>1</sup> The exchequer was stable and localised, the converging point of all streams of English revenues, and the reservoir from which foreign enterprises could be supplied in money or in kind. Its organisers, influenced presumably by their knowledge of the national exchequer, had planned an enduring fabric, and under the guidance of Peter Lacy, receiver-general, it enjoyed continuity of control for a period of unusual length; in this period it could consolidate its position. It would seem on the whole to have maintained harmonious relations with the national exchequer,<sup>2</sup> but was never as comprehensive in its scope; it was primarily a department of receipt and issue, rather than of audit.<sup>3</sup> Yet the prince's exchequer, like its illustrious prototype, was more than a purely financial office, though other functions

<sup>1</sup> See below, pp. 342-349.

<sup>2</sup> See below, pp. 336-342.

<sup>3</sup> Though the chamberlains of Chester and of Wales might be appointed to answer at the exchequer, their accounts were formally tendered to the prince's itinerant auditors. Yet other accounts seem to have been heard at Westminster, for example, that of the late bailiff of the manor of Quainton in 1347 (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144, f. 111). In this relation the use of the prince's exchequer may perhaps be compared with that of the tower assigned to Henry IV.'s queen within the palace of Westminster "for the management of her councils and businesses, the auditing of her accounts, the keeping of her charters, writings, muniments and other evidences" (*C.P.R.*, 1401-1405, p. 473). I am grateful to Miss I. M. Cooper for drawing my attention to this reference.

may be discerned but dimly, for it was certainly a court of pleas, and may have had a secretarial aspect also.

The pleas heard at the prince's exchequer of Westminster were presumably normally of financial origin,<sup>1</sup> and had in the past been determined in the localities where they arose. Journeying to the council at the exchequer at Westminster was an expense and trouble to the prince's "people of distant counties;" it had no compensating advantages, and merely led to delays. The men of Cheshire were not slow to complain of the hardships they endured by pleas being "newly drawn to the said exchequer," and were successful in the ventilation of their grievance. The prince, "with the advice of the great men of his and the king's council," decided that such business should be "determined where it used to be, unless it was so high or doubtful that it could not be determined without the prince and his council." For weighty business of this nature four periods were set apart every year,<sup>2</sup> and then the people of the prince's lordships were expected to attend at Westminster or wherever the council was.<sup>3</sup> The exchequer was certainly a frequent meeting-place for the council,<sup>4</sup> and in this particular relation the councillors took on the character of "barons of the exchequer." The prince's exchequer was certainly unpopular as a court of pleas, even as it had been as a financial office.

The prince's exchequer may also have had a secretarial aspect, but indications of this are vague or ambiguous. For instance, inquisitions were sometimes returned there, presumably for the information of the council. "Matters concerning the office of his [the prince's] escheatrics are henceforth to be returnable at Westminster, and to have their warrant from that place as before," says an order to Cheshire commissioners in 1351.<sup>5</sup> This seems to refer to the prince's exchequer, where the council, which was especially closely connected with the prince's escheatrics, were

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144, f. 19, where the steward of Fordington was ordered to come to the prince's exchequer at Westminster at the quinzene of Hilary to answer before the prince's council for distrains made upon one of the prince's tenants of Fordington (Oct. 1346).

<sup>2</sup> The octaves of the quinzene of Easter, the quinzene of Midsummer, Michaelmas, and Hilary. Compare the terms of the English exchequer.

<sup>3</sup> All from *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 279 f. 2 (1351). At the same time steps were taken to ensure that pleas were held at the exchequer of Chester, and that the English royal exchequer should be taken as a model. (See below, p. 342, n. 1.)

<sup>4</sup> See below, p. 384.

<sup>5</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 279, f. 4.

wont to meet. Elsewhere we find that writs of *diem clausit extremum*, for instance, were to be issued by the keeper of the prince's privy seal, and the resultant inquisitions to be returned before the council at London.<sup>1</sup> Moreover records were certainly sometimes kept at Westminster in the care of the head of the exchequer,<sup>2</sup> though the wardrobe too had its chests of memoranda.<sup>3</sup> On one occasion the cost of the binding for a book "to be placed in the exchequer" is recorded.<sup>4</sup> There is therefore some evidence to suggest, though not enough to prove, that the exchequer of Westminster, like the exchequers of Chester or Carnarvon, was a secretarial as well as a financial office.<sup>5</sup> The seal was certainly sometimes used there.

Little is known of the buildings of the prince's exchequer, but it is probable that the rooms he used were closely connected with the national exchequer, perhaps in the same way as the exchequer of the Jews a century earlier, when there were two small rooms leading from the main exchequer, one of which was allotted to the Jews' use.<sup>6</sup> There is no actual evidence to connect the Black Prince's exchequer with "the prince's chamber," also within the palace of Westminster, though it is perhaps unlikely that they

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 384.

<sup>2</sup> Seven rolls of letters patent, writs and other memoranda concerning Wales were delivered by the keeper of the exchequer for the use of the justices in eyre in the principality on Nov. 12, 1347 (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144, f. 131). Just before this date the keeper of the exchequer was, however, also keeper of the privy seal in England, during the absence of the prince and another privy seal and its keeper (see below, p. 374); the prince returned to England on Oct. 15, 1347. In this case, therefore, it is possible that these rolls were kept at Westminster as a temporary arrangement, which was continued for a while after the prince's return. The rolls of the sessions of South Wales were also ordered to be delivered to the treasury of the exchequer (*ib.* f. 25d). Again in 1358 the "inquisitions, memoranda, books and other evidences touching the affairs of Cheshire" kept in "the prince's treasury at London" were needed at Chester, and the receiver-general was ordered to purchase a horse to carry the books, etc., to Chester (*ib.* 278, f. 148). This horse was "lost" on the journey (*ib.* f. 185d). It seems probable from this reference, however, that the books were not actually in the custody of the receiver-general, for he was not ordered to hand them over to Wolveston, in whose care they travelled north, though they were kept in the "treasury."

<sup>3</sup> See below, p. 343.

<sup>4</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.*, 278 f. 267d.

<sup>5</sup> Compare Evans, *Cymm. Soc. Pub. loc. cit.* p. 36, n. 1.

<sup>6</sup> See *C.R.*, 1231-34, p. 100. I understand that Miss I.M. Cooper has collected, for a thesis on the palace of Westminster, some interesting information about the topography of the royal exchequer, but she tells me she has reached no conclusions about the exchequer of the Black Prince.



were far apart.<sup>1</sup> Glass was bought for the windows of the prince's exchequer on one occasion,<sup>2</sup> and once "*la verte chambre de la receyte*," presumably part of his exchequer, is mentioned.<sup>3</sup> A "counter" used in the receipt of the prince while he lived is also referred to in the first year of his son's reign.<sup>4</sup> The prince's "receipt" is often mentioned in the later pages of his registers, more often indeed than the exchequer which the word presumably describes,<sup>5</sup> but references to his "treasury in London"<sup>6</sup> more probably describe a treasury within the city itself,<sup>7</sup> perhaps the storehouse of the great wardrobe.

There is a similar silence as to officials of the exchequer, other than the keeper, receiver and auditors. The latter had, however, a wider purview than the exchequer itself.<sup>8</sup> In 1362 William Norwell appears as a chief baron of the prince's exchequer, and Thomas Ferrers as surveyor of the prince's moneys. The position of each is obscure; perhaps they were never attached to the exchequer at Westminster but were concerned solely with the administration of the principality of Aquitaine.<sup>9</sup> At least one clerk<sup>10</sup> and an usher<sup>11</sup> were employed at Westminster. It is

<sup>1</sup> For the prince's chamber see below, p. 362.

<sup>2</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 162.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* 280, f. 59. In this green room of the receipt the prince's council endorsed a bill submitted to them.

<sup>4</sup> A payment was then made "*pro factura unius computatori de novo in recepta nuper domino Principi dum vixit assignata pro Willelmo Walworth et Johanni Philipott Receptoribus denariorum pro guerra regis pro receptione denariorum regis.*" *I.R.* 465, 1 Richard II. (Jan. 27). I am grateful to Miss M. H. Mills for drawing my attention to this reference.

<sup>5</sup> *E.g.* *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 85d. Such references usually concern the receiver-general. There are also references to the receipt of the wardrobe, however (see below, p. 353).

<sup>6</sup> *E.g.* *C.P.R.*, 1358-61, p. 290.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. "our treasury in the city of London" *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 172d).

<sup>8</sup> See below, pp. 335-338.

<sup>9</sup> Norwell was to be paid 5s. a day for his wages by the constable of Bordeaux. The names occur in a combined list of officials of the household and of Gascony issued when the prince was about to set out for the principality of Aquitaine (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 251d).

<sup>10</sup> *E.g.* John Cory, called variously "clerk of the exchequer," "clerk of the receipt" (1344-45, *MSS. Harl.* 4304, f. 18d, 19), and "clerk of Peter Gildesburgh" (May 1348, *M.A.* 1221/5, m. 5). He was Gildesburgh's lieutenant in the exchequer during his absence from Westminster (*e.g.* 1346, *M.B.E.*, *T.R.*, 144 f. 24 and 52), and in 1349 was the prince's attorney-general (*C.P.R.*, 1348-1350, p. 331).

<sup>11</sup> *E.g.* John Undle, acting in 1344-45 (*MSS. Harl.* 4304, f. 18d) and 1346, when the arrears of his wages were ordered to be paid to him (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144, f. 24).

probable, also, that the king lent exchequer officials to the prince, to act in subordinate, as well as more responsible, positions, for gifts or payments to such royal servants are not uncommon.

The organisation of the prince's exchequer cannot be completely revealed, through the limitations of record information, though perhaps the archives of the national exchequer may some day produce further light. For the same reason a sketch of his financial system as a whole cannot aim at completeness. At one end were the lowliest local officials, bailiffs, farmers of manors and the like, who perhaps tendered their accounts to the local sheriffs, who in turn submitted them to the chief local financial officer, such as the chamberlain of Chester or the receiver of the duchy of Cornwall. The accounts of the chamberlains and receivers were submitted to the prince's auditors, either at Westminster, or on their frequent visits for the purposes of audit and other business to the various parts of the prince's dominions, and the local officials were acquitted by these auditor-councillors. But the local officials had made periodic liveries of the moneys they had received to agents of the prince's central administration, usually to the wardrobe or the exchequer. These sums were again accounted for by the keeper of the wardrobe or the receiver-general, in the accounts which they in turn submitted to the prince's auditors.<sup>1</sup>

The auditors of the household accounts, or of the receiver-general's department, in itself an offshoot of the household, were therefore the apex of the prince's financial system, and the auditors of local ministers' accounts, though important links with the central system and usually members of the prince's council, did not hold such a pre-eminent position. Thus, during the prince's minority, the personnel of auditors for the accounts of the household was controlled by the king,<sup>2</sup> although local auditors

<sup>1</sup> In essentials the system was similar to that used by earlier eldest sons of the king, whose auditors of local accounts held much the same position. (For Edward of Carnarvon's, see above, ii. p. 179; for Edward of Windsor's, e.g. *Chester Plea roll*, 35, m. 3, 38, m. 8d; Brown, pp. 96, 100; also above, iv. p. 74.) The existence and responsibility of auditors of central accounts is less certain; Edward of Carnarvon's household accounts, for instance, were for years submitted either to the wardrobe or to the exchequer, an even more drastic measure of control (see above, ii. pp. 166-167).

<sup>2</sup> E.g. *C.P.R.*, 1330-34, p. 547 (1334); *C.P.R.*, 1340-43, p. 577 (1343).

were nominally appointed by the lord Edward himself even as a baby.<sup>1</sup> After 1347<sup>2</sup> he appointed all auditors.

There was little practical difference between appointments made by king and by prince. The personnel appointed changed very little: thus, for instance, in 1343 the king appointed Gervase Wilford, Hugh Colewick and Ambrose Newburgh to audit the account of the prince's treasurer;<sup>3</sup> in 1347 the prince appointed the first two and Nicholas Pinnock (Newburgh being dead) to audit the accounts of his receiver.<sup>4</sup> An auditor once appointed usually continued to be appointed: thus Ambrose Newburgh was an auditor (both local and central) from 1337 till his death (before 1345). Thomas Hockley was frequently commissioned as auditor between 1348 and 1358, so was Nicholas Pinnock for about the same period, and so on. There were clearly greater and lesser auditors. Thus Pinnock appears first as an auditor of local accounts (1342) and later (1345) of a household account, the latter being, of course, the more important role.<sup>5</sup> Similarly Gervase Wilford and Hugh Colewick, being important officials of the English exchequer, were never commissioned for the audit of any but central accounts; they were appointed first by the king, but continued to be appointed by the prince.

The auditors, whether local or central, of the accounts due to the prince, were frequently, though not always, at the same time officers of the national exchequer. For instance Gervase Wilford, auditor of the accounts of the prince's treasurer from February 1341<sup>6</sup> until 1344<sup>7</sup> and probably

<sup>1</sup> *M.R.*, *K.R.* 114, m. 51d; cf. the position of the auditors acting in connection with the coinage of Cornwall, 1337-38 (*M.R.*, *L.T.R.*, 116, *communia Mich.* m. 3).

<sup>2</sup> That is, after the prince attained his majority. The first such appointment of which I know was on March 9, 1347, when auditors of the prince's receiver were appointed (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144, f. 47d). In the same year the king appointed the same auditors to hear an account of the keeper of the prince's wardrobe, for a period, however, of his minority (*C.P.R.*, 1345-48, p. 387).

<sup>3</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1340-43, p. 577.

<sup>4</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.*, 144, f. 47d.

<sup>5</sup> Compare the inferior position of Thomas Hockley in 1359, who was then ordered to show all the accounts he had audited for a certain period to Spridlington, another auditor, and not to account with any of the ministers in future without the presence of Spridlington or Stokes (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 186d).

<sup>6</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1340-43, p. 577; *E.A.* 389/3.

<sup>7</sup> Wilford was reappointed by the king on May 21, 1345 (*M.R.*, *L.T.R.* 118 (1346), *communia*, Hilary recorda, m. 6) to audit Gildesburgh's account (*M.R.*, *K.R.* 122, *brevia directa baronibus*. Trinity, m. 7d). This account ran from Mich. 1342 to July 31, 1344 (*E.A.* 390/3).



longer,<sup>1</sup> auditor of his receiver's account from July to December 1346<sup>2</sup> and from February 1348 until Michaelmas 1349,<sup>3</sup> had long been employed in the exchequer,<sup>4</sup> and was a baron from 1341 onwards and chief baron in 1350.<sup>5</sup> Hugh Colewick similarly, who was appointed on each occasion as one of Wilford's colleagues and who was still acting in 1352,<sup>6</sup> had been a baron of the exchequer as early as 1332, and was apposer of the sheriff's foreign summons in 1346 and engrosser in 1347.<sup>7</sup> Such auditors were evidently regarded as rather more important persons than their colleagues who were more closely associated with the prince.<sup>8</sup> Exchequer

<sup>1</sup> He was apparently an auditor of the account of John Hale, keeper of the wardrobe, who succeeded Gildesburgh (*C.P.R.*, 1345-48, p. 387).

<sup>2</sup> He was appointed with others to audit John Pirye's account as receiver (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144, f. 47d), and Pirye was only acting for these months (see appendix).

<sup>3</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 4.

<sup>4</sup> He was clerk to the king's remembrancer in 1327-28, and lord treasurer's remembrancer, 1329-41.

<sup>5</sup> All these facts as to exchequer officials come from the appendices of Dr. D. M. Broome's unpublished thesis on "The exchequer in the reign of Edward III., a preliminary investigation."

<sup>6</sup> *M.R.*, *L.T.R.* 118 (*ut supra*).

<sup>7</sup> It would be tedious to expand this point. Other auditors who also held office in the exchequer are William Chester (auditor of the lord Edward's treasurer's account in 1334 (*C.P.R.*, 1330-34, p. 547)), Ambrose Newburgh, auditor of various ministers' accounts for periods between 1334 (*e.g.* Brown, p. 109 (Chester)), and 1343 (*e.g.* *M.A.* 812/2, m. 4 (Cornwall)), and associated with Wilford and Colewick as an auditor of the treasurer's accounts from 1341 till his death, before Feb. 1345 (*C.P.R.*, 1343-45, p. 492); Peter Gildesburgh (see above, p. 326); William Spridlington, one of the auditors of the account of William Norwell as treasurer (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278 f. 70), date uncertain, but Norwell was treasurer between 1345-49, and submitted one account for that period (see *M.A.* 1214/3, an account of the chamberlain of North Wales). Spridlington was also one of the auditors of the receiver's account, 1348-49 (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 4), and subsequently almost continuously an auditor of both local and central accounts till the prince's death; he also became bishop of St. Asaph and was one of the prince's executors. William of Wykeham, bishop of Winchester, was one of the auditors of the treasurer's account appointed in 1358 (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 149). For the auditor, Richard Fillongley, see below, p. 365, n. 5, for Peter Lacy above, p. 328, for Wingfield, p. 387, and Stafford, p. 390, n. 2.

<sup>8</sup> *E.g.* *M.R.*, *K.R.* 122, brevia directa baronibus Trinity, m. 7d, also *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 158. A recitation of the accounts of the late butler was not to be concluded by the other auditors without the concurrence of Wilford and Colewick. Auditors apparently not employed in any important capacity at the exchequer were Nicholas Hugate, one of the treasurer's auditors appointed in 1334 (*C.P.R.*, 1330-34, p. 547); James Woodstock, appointed an auditor of local ministers' accounts in 1337 (*M.R.*, *K.R.* 114, m. 51d); William Castle, similarly appointed in 1337 (*ib.*); Thomas Hockley, an auditor of accounts of local ministers from 1339 if not earlier (in that year he, with others, audited the account of the receiver of Cornwall, *M.A.* 816/11, m. 19), who was still acting in such a capacity in 1359 (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278 f. 186d), and who was occasionally

officials became less prominent among the auditors however as the prince increased in years and wisdom.

In the same way, though to a less noticeable degree, the prince's local financial officials, as well as his central receiver and treasurer, were usually king's clerks, frequently of the exchequer, who had been drafted to the prince's service, and who, though their direct connection with the exchequer might have ceased, were imbued with its traditions. Thus though the prince's accounts were not drawn up and passed through the ordinary channels of exchequer procedure, they were, both in the first and the last instance, indirectly subjected to the spirit at least of that department's administration, in the personnel of accountants, receivers and auditors. But exchequer control was sometimes expressed more directly than through the habits of a common civil service. At times the king insisted that his heir's accounts should be lodged in the exchequer after audit, but such insistence was effective, apparently, only during the prince's minority. Perhaps while the king was appointing the auditors it was possible to enforce his demands; it seems probable that the non-survival of the prince's accounts after he attained his majority may be explained by the virtual independence of his officials at that time from effective exchequer control.<sup>1</sup>

There is little information easily accessible on the question

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(e.g. in 1351, *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 4), but by no means always, also amongst the auditors of central accountants (e.g. he was not amongst such auditors appointed in 1354 (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 70), or in 1358 (*ib.* f. 149)); Nicholas Pinnock, an auditor for local ministers from 1342 (*M.A.* 812/2, m. 2), who was still acting in 1357 (*Transcripts*, *M.A.* Duchy of Cornwall, i. nos. 9 and 10), who was also often amongst the auditors of central accountants; John Pirye (see above, p. 327); Hugh Barton acting for both local and central purposes in 1358 (e.g. *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 149, *ib.* 150d), Richard Stokes, also acting in both capacities from 1359 (*ib.* f. 186d), who remained an auditor of local ministers throughout the greater part of the reign of Richard II.; John Henxteworth, appointed with others in 1362 to audit the treasurer's account (*ib.* f. 227d), John Carleton appointed with others for local purposes in 1362 (*ib.* f. 232d); William Cranewell, similarly appointed, and still acting in 1367 (*Transcripts*, *M.A.* Duchy of Cornwall, ii. no. 16); Robert Vaggestok; and John Cary, acting in 1375 (*M.A.* 812/14). Of these, many had done years of service to the prince himself in various capacities, and others had been variously employed in the king's service.

<sup>1</sup> Accounts seem to have remained in the custody of the auditors, witness an attempt under Richard II. to get Richard Stokes, late auditor, to bring the prince's accounts to the exchequer (*M.R.*, *K.R.* 159, brev. dir. bar, Hilary, m. 10). Again I am indebted to Miss Broome for referring me to this entry.

of the submission of the prince's accounts at the king's exchequer. In March 1346 the king sent a letter to the auditors of the prince, who had been duly accredited to hear Peter Gildesburgh's account as treasurer, telling them to deliver the audited account at the exchequer.<sup>1</sup> At the same time he sent a writ to the treasurer and barons at the exchequer, ordering them to receive the same account "*et le facez enrrouler en les roules de la place pur y demorer de record a touz iours, en meisme la manere come sont les autres acomptes a nous renduz en la dite place.*" They were further ordered to do the same in future with all accounts of the prince's chief receivers or treasurers of the wardrobe, "*sige ses busoignes illoques soient tretees et faites en la place par autieles leis et usages qe sont noz busoignes propres.*"<sup>2</sup> It is clear that at the time of this writ the account in question had already been audited, and that there was no suggestion of audit at the exchequer. In the following July two of the auditors delivered at the exchequer the rolls of account for all the time Gildesburgh was treasurer, together with the books, rolls of particulars, and counter-roll, and also letters of acquittance and other memoranda touching the account, all safely contained in three leather and two canvas bags. These remained in the custody of the engrosser, in a certain chest assigned for the accounts of the issues of the prince's lands.<sup>3</sup> So far so good; but I can find little indication that the accounts were recorded by the engrosser on the great roll, according to the king's commands.<sup>4</sup>

This newly instituted formality was not automatically continued, and in November 1351 the prince himself found it necessary to order the auditors of the receiver-general to deliver his account

<sup>1</sup> I cannot trace this writ.

<sup>2</sup> *M.R.*, *K.R.* 122. Brev. dir. bar., Trinity Term, m. 7d.

<sup>3</sup> *M.R.*, *L.T.R.* 118 (communia, Hilary, recorda, m. 6). As late as 1366 a letter under the prince's great seal of Aquitaine was deposited by the exchequer for safe custody in "a certain hamper in the lesser chest with three locks in (*supra*) the receipt, with this sign . . ." There follows a delightful drawing of a lion rampant which I cannot reproduce (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 273, p. 2). Mr. D. L. Evans kindly drew my attention to this. (See also Palgrave, *Kalendars and Inventories*, i. p. 208.)

<sup>4</sup> *P.R.O.*, *Lists and Indexes*, xi. (list of foreign accounts) gives no indication of any accounts of the Black Prince. Nor do the headings on the dorse of the Pipe Roll for 1346. Occasionally ministers' accounts are, however, hidden in shire accounts, (*viz.* the shire where the accountant held his lands), and are unindexed, and, therefore, difficult to trace.



to the exchequer, in accordance with the king's mandate of 1346.<sup>1</sup> In the following February there is duly recorded the delivery at the exchequer by these auditors of one bag, containing the various accounts of Peter Lacy as receiver-general and keeper of the wardrobe, together with counter-rolls, letters of acquittance, etc. This bag also remained in the custody of the engrosser in the chest assigned to the prince's business.<sup>2</sup> I have found no evidence that further accounts were similarly submitted.<sup>3</sup>

The permanent deposit of the prince's accounts at the exchequer was probably necessary in order to facilitate the collection of the debts due to him. It would seem that from an early date exchequer machinery was used for this purpose. Thus in 1339 the king told the treasurer and barons that the duke of Cornwall's business was to be treated in the exchequer in the same way as the king's business.<sup>4</sup> Later it is stated that if any minister of the lord Edward be found in arrears with his account rendered before the prince's auditors in the exchequer, he is to be taken to the Fleet prison till he has done the prince's pleasure.<sup>5</sup> In 1343 it is explained in a writ to the treasurer and barons under the great seal that the bailiffs, etc., of the prince have refused to come to his exchequer to pay their farms or to render their accounts, and that the king, wishing to provide for his greater security, therefore orders them to use such process against the prince's defaulting ministers under the seal of the king's exchequer as was wont to be used against similar ministers of the king.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 20d.

<sup>2</sup> *M.R.*, *L.T.R.* 118. *Adhuc communia*, Hilary, 20 Edward III. *Adhuc recorda*, m. 6. The reference to the 1351 deposit is an addition to the earlier entries concerning Gildesburgh's accounts (see above, p. 339).

<sup>3</sup> Further detailed search of all later memoranda rolls might reveal more information, however; I have only sampled occasional rolls.

<sup>4</sup> *M.R.*, *L.T.R.* 111 (*communial*, Hilary, m. 13). Compare the wording of the king's writ of 1346 (above, p. 339). I am grateful to Dr. Broome for drawing my attention to this entry. A still earlier writ would seem to have been issued to the same effect, which I have not succeeded in tracing.

<sup>5</sup> *M.R.*, *L.T.R.* 117 (*communial*, Easter, m. 5d).

<sup>6</sup> "Rex, Thesaurario et Baronibus, etc. Quia datum est nobis intelligi quod firmarii, balliui et alii ministri dilecti et fidelis nostri Edwardis Principis Wallie (etc.) filii nostri (etc.) necnon receptores exituum terrarum et tenementorum ac denariorum ipsius filii (etc.) . . . et executores qui testamentorum huiusmodi firmariorum ballivorum ministrorum et receptorum iam defunctorum firmas et exitus ac denarios eiusdem filii per ipsos firmarios ballivos etc. . . . preceptos ad scaccarium ipsius filii nostri solvere seu inde respondere ut tenentur, aut ad idem scaccarium pro huiusmodi solucionibus ibidem faciendis vel compotis

On both these latter occasions it is clear that payments are to be made and accounts rendered in the prince's exchequer; these writs were enrolled on the memoranda rolls at such times as proceedings were about to be taken against the lord Edward's accountants.<sup>1</sup> Similarly the information concerning the custody of the prince's audited accounts in the exchequer<sup>2</sup> followed on proceedings taken against Gildesburgh for arrears.<sup>3</sup>

Such a use of the national exchequer for the collection of debts not due to the crown itself was no new thing. In the late thirteenth century the arrears of accounts of the Jews were collected through the king's exchequer and not through the so-called exchequer of the Jews.<sup>4</sup> In the fourteenth the dowager queen Isabella had the same privileges in this respect as the Black Prince.<sup>5</sup> The exchequer had a reputation for efficiency, and other bodies of a similar nature could not copy its methods effectively, though perhaps they might attempt to do so. Even Edward III.'s chamber could not enforce its powers of audit without exchequer assistance.<sup>6</sup> I have as yet found no evidence that the prince's debts continued to be collected in this way throughout the later years of his life, but the order that the prince's needs were to be treated in the exchequer in the same way as the king's was certainly still in force in 1354.<sup>7</sup> A parallel movement towards reorganising the exchequer of Chester on the

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suis reddendis ad mandatum prefati filii nostri venire recusant in ipsius filii nostri dampnum et jacturam manifestam. Nos indemnitati predicti filii nostri in hac parte prospicere volentes vobis mandamus quod talem processum versus firmarios etc. . . . eiusdem filii . . . quoscunque ad executores etc. pro firmis et redditibus ac denariis quibuscunque ad scaccarium suum solvendis et inde prout decet respondendis et compotis suis ibidem reddendis fieri faciatis sub sigillo scaccarii nostri predicti qualem versus firmarios, etc. . . . nostrorum hactenus ad idem scaccarium fieri consuevit. Teste me ipso apud Dytton 30 Nov. 17°." (*M.R.*, *K.R.* 121, Brev. dir. bar., Trinity 19 Edward III. m. 19d). An almost identical writ, *mutatis mutandis*, was issued to the prince's executors in 1376 (below, p. 398, n. 1).

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.* against Simon Rugeley, late chamberlain of Chester (1339, *M.R.*, *L.T.R.* 111), against John Warwick, sub-sheriff of Anglesey (1343, *M.R.*, *L.T.R.* 117). Compare the proceedings against John Hamelyn, late sheriff of Cornwall (1342, *M.R.*, *L.T.R.* 116).

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 339.

<sup>3</sup> *M.R.*, *L.T.R.* 118 (*loc. cit.*).

<sup>4</sup> For the relations between the "Jewish exchequer" and the treasurer and barons of the king's exchequer, see Madox, i. p. 249, etc. (1769). Also H. Jenkinson, *Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society*, viii. pp. 19-54, and C. G. Crump, *E.H.R.* xxix. p. 551.

<sup>5</sup> *M.R.*, *K.R.* 122.

<sup>7</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 67.

<sup>6</sup> Above, iv. p. 283.

lines of the English exchequer, may be taken as a not uninteresting commentary on the prince's relations with that national department of government.<sup>1</sup>

Other relations which existed between the prince and the royal exchequer have less importance. Writs of the prince were sometimes enrolled for remembrance upon the memoranda rolls; one of his officers would present a charter from the king in favour of the prince and seek that it also might be enrolled; <sup>2</sup> payments were not infrequently made by the prince to officials of the exchequer for their pains on his behalf, sometimes in the form of an annual fee.<sup>3</sup> In time it was necessary to have a special attorney of the prince in the exchequer.<sup>4</sup> The king's desire, perhaps not disinterested, to help the lord Edward's officials to collect the moneys due, a desire which we have already seen expressed in the gift of the benefits of exchequer procedure, appears also in 1337, when evidences touching the county of Chester since 1301 were to be transcribed for the assistance of his auditors.<sup>5</sup> Relations indeed seem throughout to have been friendly and founded on mutual convenience; the same spirit seems also to have been manifested in such relations as existed between the prince's administration and the king's chancery.<sup>6</sup>

The successful development of the prince's exchequer as a

<sup>1</sup> In 1351 the prince and his council ordained that the chamberlain of Chester should "hold henceforth at the exchequer of Chester all manner of pleas that belong to the court (*place*) of the exchequer, and to order and manage the said exchequer as far as he can by the same course and laws as are used in the king's exchequer of England" (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 279, f. 4, clause 32). It is by no means certain that this recommendation was carried out; the reply of the Cheshire commissioners appointed to execute this and other ordinances was evasive (*ib.* f. 7).

<sup>2</sup> *E.g.* the grant of the principality of Wales (*M.R.*, *L.T.R.* 116).

<sup>3</sup> *E.g.* to the ushers of the exchequer (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144, f. 139d), and to the remembrancers and clerk of estreats (*ib.* 278, f. 23d). These latter were to be paid annually.

<sup>4</sup> *E.g.* John Cory in 1349 (*C.P.R.*, 1348-50, p. 331). Cory was also attorney-general in the chancery and before the justices.

<sup>5</sup> *M.R.*, *K.R.* 114.

<sup>6</sup> Gifts were often also made to chancery officials (*e.g.* *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144 f. 139d); in 1355 "two dozens of parchment" were delivered by the prince's receiver-general to a clerk of the king's chancery, upon which to write the writs with which he had been charged. Presumably these were royal protections for followers of the prince about to depart for Gascony (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 82d). Similarly, after he became prince of Aquitaine, Edward paid for his charters, and for their silken laces, etc. (*ib.* f. 254d).



stabilised office of receipt, from the rudimentary financial organisation of the household, did not destroy the older institution of the wardrobe. Mediaeval government abounded in such persistent survivals, which might be temporarily quiescent but were by no means obsolete, and which were ready to express that inalienable authority which still clung to the lord's person. Moreover the original wardrobe had naturally less work to accomplish in the normal course, after the exchequer, and the great wardrobe also,<sup>1</sup> had branched off from it. In peace time, in short, it was becoming domestic, a mere "wardrobe of the household,"<sup>2</sup> an accounting office of decreasing administrative importance; in war time, however, it was also military, and the most active agent of its master abroad.

The changing terminology of the century, which tended to confuse the wardrobe and the great wardrobe, makes it difficult to trace the history of the wardrobe proper in the case of the prince, as in that of his father.<sup>3</sup> It is not clear, for example, whether such phrases as "the receipt of the wardrobe," "the chapel of the wardrobe," "our wardrobe in London,"<sup>4</sup> may be taken to indicate fixed headquarters of the wardrobe of the household in the city.<sup>5</sup> There is little indication otherwise of such localisation, nor any evidence to show that the prince had recourse to the *privatum hospicium* which complicates the history of Edward III.'s wardrobe in his later years, and the existence of which might suggest stabilised headquarters for the wardrobe of the household.<sup>6</sup> Very possibly such references applied to the houses of the great wardrobe in Ironmonger Lane.<sup>7</sup> Perhaps the prince, like the king, found it convenient to have some fixed abode for the wardrobe of the household when his court was in London or its neighbourhood; the home of the great wardrobe would be the natural place for this in the absence of permanent headquarters of its own. The three chests of books, rolls and other memoranda of the wardrobe, for which two locks were bought by the national

<sup>1</sup> See below, pp. 349-356.

<sup>2</sup> The phrase "wardrobe of the household" is frequently used, e.g. *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 149.

<sup>3</sup> See above, iv. p. 160.

<sup>4</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278 (e.g. f. 172, 175, 176). For the receipt of the wardrobe, however, see below, p. 353.

<sup>5</sup> Compare similar uncertainty with regard to the king's wardrobe, above, iv. p. 87.

<sup>6</sup> See above, iv. p. 177.

<sup>7</sup> See below, pp. 352-354.

exchequer after the prince's death, and which were carried on two carts to Westminster, similarly may or may not have belonged to the wardrobe of the household.<sup>1</sup>

Though normally restricted to housekeeping, the prince's wardrobe was not lacking in dignity and grandeur. The officers continued to be persons of some distinction, and can have lost little prestige through the growth of new departments. The keepers of the middle period of his life were men well tried in the prince's service; unfortunately references to the wardrobe of his later years are practically non-existent, and we are as ignorant of its personnel as of its functions. But the prince's household then, as earlier, was undoubtedly maintained in the luxury and magnificence which the age demanded. Fleeting glimpses of his marshal<sup>2</sup> and butler,<sup>3</sup> his knights, squires and valets of the chamber in their gorgeous liveries; <sup>4</sup> his master of the great horses, his keeper of the swans in the water of Thames, his keeper of arms,<sup>5</sup> the dean and thirteen clerks of his chapel, the master of his barge with twelve fellow bargemen, the keeper of his cellars in London, the usher of his hall, his barber, his pavilioners, minstrels, heralds and messengers, the clerks and valets of kitchen, pantry, buttery, poultry, etc., testify to the state which surrounded the prince of Wales.<sup>6</sup> Indentures of service show the relations of his bachelors to his household, and that they received their wages in the wardrobe,<sup>7</sup> orders to the steward indicate the size of the retinues of his

<sup>1</sup> *I.R.* 465 (1 Richard II.).

<sup>2</sup> For example, John Montviron, acting in Aug. 1357 (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 124d); Henry of Berkhamsted, acting in Oct. 1366 (*Gasc.* 29, m. 9); Guichard d'Angle, marshal of Aquitaine, acting July 1371 (*John of Gaunt's Register*, p. 9) and earlier (Froissart, *Chroniques*, ed. Luce, vi. p. 82). For an account of Guichard d'Angle, later earl of Huntingdon, see above, iii. pp. 325-326.

<sup>3</sup> John Skirbeck was butler as early as 1336-38 (*E.A.* 387/25, m. 5), and was acting for many years. For a reference to his accounts see *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 158, when he was "lately our butler" (Jan. 1359). In Aug. 1359 William Baketon was butler (*ib.* f. 173).

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* f. 224. Golden ribbons distinguished the new hats of the knights, issued to celebrate the new year at Berkhamsted.

<sup>5</sup> See below, p. 355.

<sup>6</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278 *passim* (1351-65).

<sup>7</sup> *Ib.* f. 7d (May 1351). When the calendars of the prince's registers are published shortly it will be possible to make lists of the knights of the household or of the chamber. In the index of the calendar which is about to be published (1346-47, *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144) the following appear as the prince's bachelors: William Belesby, Richard Bere, Thomas Daniel, Thomas Danyers, William Daubeney, Thomas Ferrers, Richard Fitz Simon, Thomas Fournival, John Hide,

knights.<sup>1</sup> When the wardrobe followed its master to his new home abroad, still greater elaboration must have dignified the court of that virtually sovereign ruler the prince of Aquitaine. The wardrobe of the household remained the financial centre of the prince's domestic establishment whether he was abroad or in England.

After local accountants had been ordered to make payments to the prince's exchequer instead of to his wardrobe, as in the past,<sup>2</sup> the wardrobe drew on the exchequer for supplies "of as much money as is needed for the expenses of the prince and his household."<sup>3</sup> But the new system did not prove entirely satisfactory to the household, and for a time the issues of certain lordships were assigned to its use. Thus in 1352 the prince's council decreed that the issues of Cornwall should be paid directly to the treasurer of the wardrobe;<sup>4</sup> certain Cheshire issues were similarly treated.<sup>5</sup> The park of Byfleet was reserved for the expenses of the household in 1355,<sup>6</sup> but was administered by the chamber and not the wardrobe.<sup>7</sup> Such arrangements were disliked by the receiver-general, who kept control over Cornish arrears.<sup>8</sup> By 1355 the Cornish order was rescinded,<sup>9</sup> by 1356-57 all Cheshire liveries were made to the receiver-general.<sup>10</sup> This experiment of assigning certain revenues for household expenses was perhaps copied from the revival of the same policy in the king's wardrobe. Similarly the assignment of the proceeds of the sale of wardships in Cheshire towards the expenses of the prince's

Edmund Kendale, Nigel Loring, William Shareshull, Richard Stafford, Edmund Wauncy In 1354 John Mohun lord of Dunster, John Montacute, Nigel Loring, John Sully and Walter Woodland witnessed a letter patent as knights of the household (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 280, f. 43d).

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.* *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 171.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 324.

<sup>3</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144, f. 46 (July 7, 1346). The later registers of the prince frequently testify to the continuance of such supplies (*e.g.* *ib.* 278, f. 82d).

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* 280, f. 28d (Dec. 7, 1352). The order was made "Porceque nous desirroms durement molt qe touz les paiementz affaire pur les despences de nostre hostiel soient desore plus prestement faitz qe ceux ne soleint einz ces heures et les gardeins de nostre hostiel le plus en certain et a greindre honeur et profit de nous et au pleissance et meindre damage de poeple le puissent le mieltz guyer et gouverner, si avoms par avis de nostre conseil ordinez, etc."

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* 279, f. 47 (Dec. 13, 1352). In 1353-54 payments from Cheshire issues were made both to the receiver-general and to the treasurer of the wardrobe (Brown, p. 218).

<sup>6</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 91d.

<sup>8</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 280, f. 36d.

<sup>7</sup> See below, p. 358, n. 3.

<sup>9</sup> *Ib.* f. 52d.

<sup>10</sup> Brown, p. 236.



hall at Kennington, that is to say to assist one branch of domestic expenditure,<sup>1</sup> is reminiscent of the king's allocation of wardships in aid of the expenses of the household.<sup>2</sup> It is noticeable that these expedients were adopted in both wardrobes between 1349 and 1352. Although the prince's household normally depended on the exchequer for its funds, although its accounts were audited by the receiver-general amongst others, it can at no time have experienced the same drastic control that the national exchequer, strengthened by its own traditions and the repeated cry of some generations of reformers, exercised at times over the royal wardrobe. But it is probable that in both cases latent antipathy was now to some extent stilled by a growing sense of the unity of all administrative institutions.<sup>3</sup>

The prince's wardrobe, still a domestic purse and still an itinerant department, naturally and on the royal analogy bore the brunt of his war-time expenditure. When he was in Gascony from 1355-57 for example, drafts were remitted from the receiver-general in England.<sup>4</sup> Some fees of war were paid in England before the departure of the expedition by the receiver-general, but it consequently rested with the treasurer of the household to square up accounts with him. "For the prince wills that all expenses for the said voyage be entirely accounted for in our said household."<sup>5</sup> In the journal of payments made abroad by the prince's controller during 1355-56, fees of war are a large item.<sup>6</sup> Yet the prince was not entirely responsible for the financing of these southern campaigns, and the treasury of Bordeaux certainly took its share.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Brown, p. 157 (Dec. 1349).

<sup>2</sup> See above, iv. pp. 120-122.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. above, iv. p. 163.

<sup>4</sup> Henxteworth's *Day-Book*. The loans from the receiver-general, here frequently mentioned, do not seem to have been "prests" in the strict usage of the king's wardrobe, for they were repayable. For example, the sum of £368 : 2 : 8, borrowed from Lacy in July 1355, was certainly repaid him. The problem of the financial resources of the wardrobe at this period is closely interwoven with the whole problem of financial responsibility for this phase of the war.

<sup>5</sup> *M.B.E., T.R.* 278, f. 95. The receiver-general paid as much as £7242 to knights and men-at-arms before Sept. 7, 1355.

<sup>6</sup> Henxteworth's *Day-Book*. The main items are payments for food, clothing, alms, wages and fees of war.

<sup>7</sup> *E.g. E.A.* 26/35. This is an indenture between the prince's treasurer of the wardrobe and a chamberlain of the national exchequer, in which the prince's treasurer acknowledged the receipt of various large sums of money to be taken to the prince's treasury at Bordeaux to deliver to the constable there for

When the prince of Aquitaine finally took up residence in his Gascon principality he was accompanied by his wardrobe. Consequently it disappears from our view. On the eve of the prince's departure John Pembridge was appointed to have *la charge de notre garderobe es parties d'Aquitaine*, and was to receive from the keeper of the wardrobe the wages of the other workers in his office, and the cost of materials purchased.<sup>1</sup> Thus he seems merely to have been head of the tailoring department abroad.<sup>2</sup> I know of no other wardrobe appointments, though names of occasional treasurers of the household survive in Gascon accounts.<sup>3</sup> It seems probable that the wardrobe continued to travel round the country with the prince, but may well have found it necessary to have some fixed headquarters. A house in the Rue des Ayres, Bordeaux, was known in 1375 as "the wardrobe of the lord prince,"<sup>4</sup> but this may well have been merely a great wardrobe for Gascony. Frequent payments are recorded during the prince's tenure of the principality, both into the treasury of the prince's household and into the wardrobe;<sup>5</sup> and it is impossible to say certainly whether any distinction between them is implied. Such sums came in part from Gascon resources, but as money was frequently

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payment for victuals during the war (Aug. 1355). An indenture made between king and prince details the strength of the prince's retinue (viz. 433 men-at-arms, 400 mounted archers, 300 foot-archers) and shows that the king was bound to pay the wages of war of this retinue in advance for six months at a time (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 88, printed in Beltz *Memorials of the Garter*, appendix ii.).

<sup>1</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 260d (June 8, 1363).

<sup>2</sup> A similar position was probably held earlier by Henry Aldrington, appointed as tailor, Dec. 9, 1355 (*ib.* f. 102d), still acting, 1359 (*ib.* f. 180) and frequently called "*garderobarius*" in 1355-56 (Henxteworth's *Day-Book*), and perhaps by William Stratton to whom some of the parcels of the great wardrobe were delivered in 1347 (*ib.* 144, f. 98d) and who was also (as "Giliot de Stratton") called "*garderobarius*" (*ib.* f. 100d). A William Stratton was at work for the lord Edward as early as 1330 (see above, iv. p. 389) and answered for bed coverings, liveries, velvet robes, etc. between 1336 and 1338 (*E.A.* 387/25 m. 7); he was the prince's tailor in 1340 (*E.A.* 389/6). He was granted an annuity from the issues of Dee mills, which he received as "tailor of the prince's chamber," from 1347-48 (Brown, p. 123) till 1354-55 (*ib.* p. 229) and as late tailor, in 1356-57 (*ib.* p. 235). He was still receiving his annuity, and was then a knight, in 1362-63 (*M.A.* 772/4).

<sup>3</sup> See below, p. 367.

<sup>4</sup> "*la guardaroba domini principis*" (*Rôles Gascons* I. xxiii.). It is improbable that this "high stone house" was primarily a record depository and secretarial office (*ib.* xxiv. Drouyn, *Bordeaux vers 1450*, p. 425).

<sup>5</sup> *E.g.* Delpit, p. 136.

received from England for the prince's needs in Gascony, a part of this also doubtless found its way to the wardrobe.<sup>1</sup>

The prince's wardrobe, at home or abroad, in peace as in war, developed in much the same way, to meet similar needs, as the royal wardrobe had done in his father's early years, and in the more distant past. Its sphere remained ill-defined, and it retained great potentialities. It developed some system of record keeping;<sup>2</sup> it might, on occasion, deal with judicial no less than financial and administrative matters.<sup>3</sup> Its duties naturally overlapped to some extent those of the exchequer, but on the rare occasions when a glimpse can be obtained of the expenditure of the keeper of the wardrobe, it is not so varied and all-embracing as that of the receiver-general, and is in the main restricted to prests in favour of the subordinate household officials, such as the clerk of the pantry and the rest.<sup>4</sup> Some indication of the scope of wardrobe activities is revealed in appointments of auditors, or letters in pursuance to the controller of the household. Allowance was to be made on the keeper's account for all sums paid by witness of the controller, or by the prince's letters of warrant, namely for expenses made in the household and foreign expenses, such as gifts, alms, necessities, messengers, wages and fees of war—"and other things whatsoever which he shall have made by our order,"—and also prests, for fees and wages of war and for the officers of the household.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 366.

<sup>2</sup> There was, for example, a "book of memoranda of the wardrobe" (Henxteworth's *Day-Book*), and there were, of course, also accounts, which no longer survive.

<sup>3</sup> For instance a dispute about the manor of Mobberley was discussed in the wardrobe by the "justices and serjeants and other men wise in the law" (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 279, f. 219). Such discussions frequently took place in the prince's exchequer.

<sup>4</sup> Schedules of allowances to be made on the keeper's account were occasionally addressed to the auditors of the wardrobe account, but do not of course comprise more than a fraction of his total expenditure. Yet they certainly suggest the limited range of wardrobe activities in normal times. See for example *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 82d, or f. 154, where the expenses are more varied and include the costs of journeys abroad by the prince's servants, and of gifts to foreigners departing for their own country. Norwell's allowances in 1352 include a long list of gifts of jewels, horses, etc., made by the prince for the whole time Norwell was keeper of the wardrobe before Jan. 31, 1349. The horses are described, and the names of the recipients and the place of gift noted. This part of the register is printed in Beltz, *Memorials of the Garter*, appendix ii.

<sup>5</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 92d (Sept. 1355).



From the prince's wardrobe, moreover, drafts were made to the chamber, though the exchequer also contributed its share for the prince's most personal and intimate needs.<sup>1</sup> All such expenditure was a normal part of the outlay of Edward III.'s wardrobe also.

The names of the clerical officials of the prince's wardrobe,<sup>2</sup> unlike those of their lay colleagues,<sup>3</sup> are little known outside the prince's administration, but within it were familiarised by years of service. His keepers and controllers<sup>4</sup> were normally his own promoted household clerks: for instance Henry Blackburn was controller before he was keeper, Hugh Barton was sub-treasurer before he was keeper, Peter Daran and William Peykirk appear as clerks before becoming controller and deputy controller. Richard Drayton was chief clerk of the treasury before becoming sub-treasurer. Some wardrobe officials passed on to the service of the privy seal; Henxteworth passed from the controllership to be keeper of the privy seal, and oddly enough John Hale went to the same office from the dignified position of keeper of the wardrobe. Others were subsequently drafted to the chamber, as for example William Peykirk and John Henxteworth. It was rare for a wardrobe official to pass from the household to the exchequer, but Alan Stokes is a conspicuous exception. The prince looked after his household officials well in his petitions to the pope, and they were reasonably supplied with canonries and livings. When the prince's registers are published, they will throw much light on the personnel of the household in the middle period of the prince's life, to supplement the meagre information of chancery roll and papal petition. But the status of the later officials, of such men as Oliver Martin, a keeper of the wardrobe in Aquitaine, is likely to remain obscure.

Common and even official usage had begun, by the fourteenth century, to confuse hopelessly "the wardrobe" and "the great

<sup>1</sup> See below, pp. 356-358.

<sup>2</sup> See appendix to this section.

<sup>3</sup> Men like Edmund Wauncy or Thomas Felton, stewards of the household, are well known through their knightly exploits; they had apparently little administrative importance as stewards. But Felton, as seneschal of Gascony and a councillor, was a conspicuous administrator also.

<sup>4</sup> Cofferers never seem to have played an important part in the prince's wardrobe; I have only once found the office mentioned (see above, p. 328).

wardrobe,"<sup>1</sup> though in the thirteenth century the two names had been kept distinct. It is thus difficult to trace the history of the Black Prince's great wardrobe. It did not appear very early in his lifetime, as it had done in that of Edward of Carnarvon. An account of liveries of cloth and fur in 1337-38, for example, was submitted by the keeper of the wardrobe, and there is no suggestion that an organised office of the great wardrobe was already in existence.<sup>2</sup> I have not found the name in use before 1346. As in the royal great wardrobe of the preceding century the office was apparently partly organised before the time when its official head was described as "keeper of the great wardrobe." Peter Lacy indeed would seem to be the only man who actually held the office under that name, though his predecessors had similar functions. Lacy was also receiver-general, and apparently the great wardrobe was always more intimately associated with the receivership than with the wardrobe of the household, perhaps because they both required the convenience of a permanent fixed abode. A connecting link between all three institutions, however, is found in the person of William Norwell.

Norwell was keeper of the wardrobe from 1345 onwards, and for a short time in the spring of 1346 was also receiver. Once some years later he was referred to as "keeper of our great wardrobe" at an unspecified date.<sup>3</sup> He certainly surrendered certain "parcels of our great wardrobe" to his successor as receiver, John Pirye.<sup>4</sup> In which of his capacities Norwell had held these parcels it is not, of course, possible to say, but henceforward the great wardrobe was closely associated with the person of the receiver. It is clear from other evidence that it was an essential part of Pirye's duty as receiver to expedite the supply of victuals to the prince's army in France,<sup>5</sup> a function which, in the king's case, normally pertained to the head of the great wardrobe. Thus on both grounds it is apparent that Pirye was virtually keeper of the great wardrobe, though nominally perhaps only known as receiver.

<sup>1</sup> A good example of this is found in the Black Prince's Cornish register (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 280, f. 36d), where the contemporary marginal heading once refers to the wardrobe, but the text refers to the great wardrobe.

<sup>2</sup> *E.A.* 388/12.

<sup>3</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 38, a letter (1352) authorising the allowance on Norwell's account of certain sums expended by the prince's tailor.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* 144, f. 49.

<sup>5</sup> See above, p. 327.

Moreover on leaving this office he was allowed his costs for six journeys to London in connection with *la deliverance de notre garderobe*, and the rendering of his accounts of the receivership and wardrobe.<sup>1</sup> Under Pirye as receiver was a certain John Spennithorne, who was assigned to keep the *choses de notre garderobe en Londres*; <sup>2</sup> he subsequently acted under Pirye's successor as receiver, Peter Lacy.<sup>3</sup> Lacy, in his turn, was charged to receive from Pirye those parcels of the great wardrobe which he had received from Norwell,<sup>4</sup> as well as others,<sup>5</sup> though this order was later in date than his actual appointment as receiver. Pirye's frequent absences from London probably explain his delay in surrendering the whole of his office.<sup>6</sup> Even in his appointment as receiver Lacy's duty of forwarding victuals was stressed.<sup>7</sup> He had another subordinate under him, one Matthew Wight, who was sent to England from abroad to hold *la garde de notre garderobe en Loundres* under the receiver.<sup>8</sup> It seems likely that in these cases "wardrobe" really meant great wardrobe, for the wardrobe proper was probably abroad with the prince in the care of Norwell; in the office in London both Spennithorne and Wight were employed under the superintendence of the receiver. The exigencies of war, and the resultant division of the household, were thus largely responsible for the development both of the office of receiver and of the department of the great wardrobe, and also for the close association of the two.

<sup>1</sup> *M.B.E., T.R.* 144, f. 94 (July 24, 1347). The auditors were told to allow him 4s. a day, for 100 days, for coming to London, staying there and returning.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* f. 58 (Dec. 19, 1346). Spennithorne was to be paid 2d. a day by Pirye as receiver. Oddly enough, this order was made the day before Pirye was succeeded by Lacy in the receivership.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* f. 71, May 19, 1347; Lacy was then ordered to pay Spennithorne's wages for such time as they had both been in office.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* f. 49, March 18, 1347.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* f. 98d. This writ, dated March 13, 1347, is registered amongst the notes for August of that year. It ordered Pirye to surrender to Lacy and to William Stratton (for whom see above, p. 347, n. 2) the parcels of the great wardrobe in his keeping, both those with which he had been charged by Norwell and others.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.* f. 27d.

<sup>7</sup> Lacy was first appointed receiver in Nov. 1346, and received fuller letters of appointment in December (*ib.* f. 33). (See above, p. 327, n. 8).

<sup>8</sup> *M.B.E., T.R.* 144, f. 68. Wight's wages of 3d. a day were to be paid him from Jan. 20, 1347. Possibly he succeeded Spennithorne, whose length of service is uncertain. In July 1347 Wight held the keeping of "*toutes noz choses de notre garderobe forpris noz armures et noz robes*" (*ib.* f. 97). His wages were then raised to 6d. a day.



For some reason Lacy was reappointed both to be receiver of the issues of lands and demesnes and also to make purchases and provision of all matters touching the office of the great wardrobe, in February 1348, and in virtue of this appointment rendered various accounts to the prince's auditors which were subsequently delivered to the royal exchequer.<sup>1</sup> These comprised the roll of account for the custody of the wardrobe of the prince, from February 8, 1348–November 12, 1348, and from that date till Michaelmas 1349, and also another roll, of the receipt and delivery of cloth and other matters concerning the wardrobe, for the same dates, also rolls of particulars, counter rolls, letters of acquittance and so on. These accounts all seem to have been concerned with the office of the great wardrobe, rather than with that of the receiver; they were not connected with the wardrobe of the household.<sup>2</sup> After 1351 Lacy certainly continued to act in both his capacities,<sup>3</sup> probably for the remainder of his long period of service. But after 1365, when the surviving registers end, the office of the great wardrobe disappears from view, and it is not even clear whether Alan Stokes, Lacy's successor as receiver, also kept the great wardrobe. It is by no means improbable that during the years of the principality of Aquitaine another great wardrobe was established in Gascony, of which we know nothing.<sup>4</sup>

The great wardrobe, as befitted a storehouse of bulky commodities, must have had some settled home in London. It is probable that this home always lay between Ironmonger Lane and the Old Jewry, on the site which the next generation seem to have regarded as appurtenant to the duchy of Cornwall,<sup>5</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> *M.R.*, *L.T.R.* 118, communia Hilary, recorda m. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Accounts of the wardrobe proper were submitted by the keepers of the wardrobe during this period (see appendix).

<sup>3</sup> As is testified by innumerable references in the prince's registers. He is occasionally called keeper of the wardrobe, in the loose terminology of the day, but other keepers certainly held office in the wardrobe of the household.

<sup>4</sup> But see above, p. 347.

<sup>5</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1374–77, p. 375, where "the inn of the wardrobe pertaining to the duchy of Cornwall" was assigned to the princess of Wales in dower. Cf. *C.P.R.*, 1385–89, p. 12, where there is a reference to "la Prince's wardrobe" in the Old Jewry. This description was still used in the time of Edward IV., when the king had many repairs done there. C. Scofield, *Life and Reign of Edward IV.* ii. p. 430. It is possible that the *hospicium* in London, which had belonged to John of Eltham as earl of Cornwall (*P.R.O. Lists and Indexes*, v. 1095/1), was subsequently used by the Black Prince as his wardrobe, and can be identified with his wardrobe in the Old Jewry.

which Stow long after recognised as the "old wardrobe" or "the king's pallace in the old Jewry."<sup>1</sup> As early as 1346 the prince wrote of repairs to be made to the "houses of our wardrobe" in "Ismongerlane."<sup>2</sup> Later it is clear that buildings of the great wardrobe existed, for there moneys were received,<sup>3</sup> and repairs and alterations were frequently made.<sup>4</sup> We hear of the chapel of the wardrobe,<sup>5</sup> which was newly made,<sup>6</sup> and also of the "receipt of the wardrobe" (which may, however, have been a treasury in connection with the improvements and repairs at the great wardrobe and at Kennington),<sup>7</sup> and also of furniture removed to the wardrobe.<sup>8</sup> There was certainly a janitor of the great wardrobe.<sup>9</sup> Though it is possible, it is on the whole improbable, that the wardrobe of the household had its separate headquarters in the city,<sup>10</sup> and thus all these expenses presumably refer to the one group of buildings. The location of the wardrobe is clearly indicated in a grant by the prince of a small plot of ground to the church of St. Olave's in the Old Jewry, which lay between St. Olave's on the south and *hospicium nostrum sive garderobam nostram* on the north, and extended from the Old Jewry on the

<sup>1</sup> Stow, *Survey of London*, ed. Kingsford, i. p. 282.

<sup>2</sup> *M.B.E., T.R.* 144, f. 23 (Nov. 1346). For the identification of Ismonger and Ironmonger see Wheatley, *London Past and Present*, ii. p. 263.

<sup>3</sup> *M.B.E., T.R.* 278, f. 51d (1353).

<sup>4</sup> For example, *ib.* f. 162, "pur la couerture del graunt pount en notre graunde Garderobe en touz custages, lxx iis iid, pur la fesaunce dune nouvelle porche de la sale deinz la dite Garderobe ove une palice ioignante a mesme la porche en touz custages xi li xviis iid." Details of repairs in the wardrobe or great wardrobe are often mentioned in association with various works in progress at Kennington (*e.g.* *ib.* f. 176, 267d).

<sup>5</sup> *E.g.* *ib.* 280, f. 66d.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.* 278, f. 135.

<sup>7</sup> In 1359 an order was given "in the receipt of the wardrobe . . . at the suit of Wigley" (*ib.* 278, f. 175d, cp. 176). A Robert Wigley is elsewhere called "clerk of the receipt of the lord in London," and was granted some money as a reward for his services as supervisor of the works at Kennington and at the great wardrobe (*ib.* f. 201d). Thus it is not impossible that Wigley was in charge of this receipt, and that it was solely concerned with moneys assigned to works. Such assignments were not uncommon: *e.g.* some Cheshire revenues were allotted towards the repairs of the hall at Kennington in 1349 (Brown, p. 157).

<sup>8</sup> A letter was directed to Lacy, as keeper of the great wardrobe, concerning the removal of furniture previously used in Pulteney's Inn (see below, p. 396), which was to be placed in "our wardrobe at London" (*M.B.E., T.R.* 278, f. 182d).

<sup>9</sup> Hugh Ellesmere, acting 1354 (*ib.* f. 96).

<sup>10</sup> See above, p. 343.

east to the prince's garden on the west.<sup>1</sup> This grant, taken in conjunction with the earlier reference to Ironmonger Lane, makes it clear that the prince's wardrobe occupied the same site which Stow allots to an ancient palace of the king.<sup>2</sup>

The prince frequently transacted business in the great wardrobe,<sup>3</sup> and probably sometimes used it as his town house. Ambiguous mentions of his *hospicium* and *hostiel* in London very possibly refer to the great wardrobe.<sup>4</sup> But he also visited it unofficially,<sup>5</sup> perhaps in the same way that Edward III. escaped from the wardrobe of the household, though I have no evidence to show that the son ever possessed the *priuatum hospicium* of his father's later years. The prince's "house" called the wardrobe in London," valued on his death at £10 a year,<sup>7</sup> was assigned to his widow as part of her dower.<sup>8</sup>

A great wardrobe was certainly essential for any magnate responsible for conducting military expeditions on a large scale or for the upkeep of a pretentious establishment: moreover, it was bound to go "out of court" very soon through the very nature of its functions. But in its close association with the receiver and exchequer and its independence of wardrobe control very soon after it had obtained any real importance, the prince's great wardrobe presents a contrast to that of the king. The purchases of the great wardrobe would seem to have been made with funds

<sup>1</sup> *M.B.E., T.R.* 278, f. 175. The land granted consisted of "quamdam parvam placeam terre hospicii nostri sive garderober nostre in eadem parochia [St. Olave's in the Old Jewry, later St. Olave's Upwell], situatam in latitudine inter dictam ecclesiam sancti Olavi ex parte australi et hospicium nostrum sive garderobam nostram ex parte boreali. Et continet in eadem latitudine duas ulnas et tres quarterias ulne de ulneis ferreis excellentissimi domini nostri patris et regis predicti. Et extendit se in longitudine a vico regio de veteri Iudaismo versus orientem usque ad gardinum nostrum versus occidentem et continet in eadem longitudine quinque ulnas et dimidiam."

<sup>2</sup> The "large building of stone, very ancient" is described in Stow, *Survey of London*, i. p. 282. I think it unlikely that this wardrobe was a home of Edward III.'s great wardrobe (see above, iv. p. 399), at any rate after 1346.

<sup>3</sup> *E.g. M.B.E., T.R.* 278, f. 172.

<sup>4</sup> As, for example, when the prince was allowed ten pounds a day from the national exchequer for the period of his journey with his *familia* from his *hospicium* in London to Calais and back, for the signing of the peace of Calais, viz. from August 24 till November 6, 1360 (Delachenal, ii. p. 241, n. 1). Such references are frequent in his registers. But he seems also to have had a *hospicium* within the palace of Westminster (*E.A.* 471/6, April 16, 1352).

<sup>5</sup> See below, p. 355.

<sup>7</sup> *Chanc. Misc.* 9/57.

<sup>6</sup> "hospicium."

<sup>8</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1374-77, p. 375.



directly assigned to its needs, or else perhaps from allowances from the prince's exchequer.<sup>1</sup> There is no evidence of financial dependence on the wardrobe. No accounts of the great wardrobe survive, but many letters of warrant directed to Lacy authorise payments for great wardrobe commodities;<sup>2</sup> it is unlikely, however, that they cover the whole range of its expenditure. Yet the sphere of the Black Prince's great wardrobe can hardly be estimated till such letters of warrant are accessible in print. It is by no means certain that its activities are exactly those of the king's more extensive establishment: for example, the prince's pavilioners were at one time certainly subordinates of the keeper of the wardrobe of the household,<sup>3</sup> and not of the great wardrobe.

The prince's great wardrobe was not itself solely responsible for all military necessities, but had a sub-department to deal with arms, which was in effect, though not in name, a privy wardrobe. Cloth and arms were not included in the parcels of the wardrobe allotted to the custody of Matthew Wight in 1347.<sup>4</sup> Cloth apparently remained under the direct control of the keeper of the great wardrobe,<sup>5</sup> but by 1351, if not earlier, arms were in the custody of Geoffrey Hamlyn, the *gardien de noz armures*,<sup>6</sup> in the chamber of arms within the great wardrobe. In this chamber the prince once stayed on a private visit, that is to say, he was probably unaccompanied by the wardrobe of the household.<sup>7</sup> The keeper of arms was clearly a subordinate of the keeper of

<sup>1</sup> Cornish arrears before 1352, when current Cornish revenues were assigned to the wardrobe for the expenses of the household (see above, p. 345), were to be paid to the receiver-general for the expenses of the great wardrobe (*M.B.E., T.R.* 280, f. 36d). Similarly, in 1353, £1029 : 11 : 10½ went from Cheshire revenues to the receiver-general, earmarked for the great wardrobe (Brown, p. 218).

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 330, for examples. Lacy's combination of offices, however, makes it impossible to distinguish between the spheres of the receivership and the great wardrobe.

<sup>3</sup> *M.B.E., T.R.* 278, f. 82d. The prince's palfreyour and clerk of the avenery were subordinates of the keeper of the wardrobe in 1352 (*ib.* f. 43).

<sup>4</sup> See above, p. 351, n. 8.

<sup>5</sup> In 1348-49 the keeper of the great wardrobe accounted for deliveries of cloth (*M.R., L.T.R.* 118 communia, Hilary, recorda, m. 6).

<sup>6</sup> Geoffrey Hamlyn, keeper of arms, was in office by 1351 (*M.B.E., T.R.* 278, f. 22d); he was discharged from office on Feb. 14, 1365, and was succeeded by William Snelling (*ib.* f. 282).

<sup>7</sup> In a list of allowances in favour of the receiver-general we find the entry, "Item in denariis liberatis domino apud magnam garderobam suam per manus Galfridi Hamelyn, valletti sui, recipientis denarios ad deferendos eosdem eidem domino tunc existente secrete in camera sua armorum" (*ib.* f. 51d, April 1353).

the great wardrobe, and rendered separate accounts for the goods in his custody.<sup>1</sup>

With the localisation of his exchequer and the constant pre-occupations of his wardrobe with the needs of war or with mere housekeeping on a large scale, the prince naturally required a privy purse more closely associated with his own person, and for this he turned to the chamber. Like his paternal ancestors before him he found the chamber a convenient vehicle for the exercise of his own prerogative, for it was an institution never hide-bound by officials. His chamber became for a time an administrative office, concerned apparently rather with the collection of one type of income and with its lord's personal expenditure, however, than with his efforts to assist in the French wars. Therefore it never became of real political or military importance like the chamber of Edward III. Yet its development runs in a course parallel to that taken by the king's chamber, and resembled this much more closely than it did the chambers of some baronial houses.<sup>2</sup>

The chamber is always the most elusive portion of a mediaeval household; its records are often non-existent or fragmentary, and verbal rather than written instructions were a natural consequence of its intimacy with the lord. The few casual references to the Black Prince's chamber which survive refer to it most frequently in its capacity as a privy purse. Thus we possess, for instance, several lists of payments made to the chamber, or paid out there.<sup>3</sup> These lists do not, of course, constitute chamber accounts, but were drawn up to exonerate the keeper of the wardrobe or the receiver-general, before the auditors of their accounts, of sums disbursed to the chamber. The earliest items date from 1346,<sup>4</sup> and the whole list is confined to sums paid for the prince's play, often with the king and queen, sometimes with

<sup>1</sup> For a list of liveries of arms from the wardrobe, for which Hamlyn was to have allowance, see *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 248d.

<sup>2</sup> See above, vol. iv. pp. 310-311.

<sup>3</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, pp. 45, 57, 83, 85d, 95d, 204d, 231d, 237.

<sup>4</sup> *I.e.* from Feb. 23, 1346 (*ib.* f. 45). List of payments made in the chamber during the time William Norwell was keeper of the wardrobe, before Jan. 31, 1349, namely, for the years 1346, 1347 and 1348. The list we possess was apparently drawn up in 1352 (*ib.* f. 43).

his own knights ; the amounts vary from trivial sums like 5s. 3d. to such sums as £105 paid for play with the king at Sandwich, or £160 paid in the chamber at Calais. In 1346 the total received by the prince was nearly £270, in 1347, £281, in 1348, £560. Following this list of payments for play is a list of jewels delivered in the chamber, for which, however, payment seems to have been made from the wardrobe.

Liveries from the wardrobe were not, however, the only source of chamber revenue even in these early days of its activity. Certain payments were due there, as, for example, fees to the chamber on rendering homage.<sup>1</sup> The association of the chamber with certain manors had already begun, moreover, for the bailiff of Watlington was appointed to answer in the chamber for its issues.<sup>2</sup> The chamber already possessed at least one usher.<sup>3</sup> On the whole, however, this early chamber had little importance, and was in the main dependent on the wardrobe for its supplies. There are no indications that it had any military significance even during the Crécy-Calais campaign.

The resources of the chamber were not, however, always so exiguous, nor its sphere so restricted. Thus loans from individuals might be made there,<sup>4</sup> or loans or gifts from the king ; in 1352, £453 was received from the issues of customs on wool ;<sup>5</sup> in 1355 certain payments were delivered as part of a loan of a thousand marks from the king.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, certain revenues would seem to have been allotted to the chamber ; in 1353-54, for example, no less than £1028 : 16 : 8 was handed over to the chamber from Cheshire issues, through the receiver-general as intermediary.<sup>7</sup> Possibly the issues of forfeitures were assigned to the prince's chamber, as they were at one time to that of Edward III.<sup>8</sup> For

<sup>1</sup> *M.B.E., T.R.* 144, f. 49 (March 1347). The keeper of the fees was to distrain a tenant of the prince till he had performed certain services and "paid the fee of the prince's chamber for the homage he has done."

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* f. 110.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* f. 108 (Sept. 1347). The usher was Roland Daney, the prince's yeoman, sometime also keeper of Cardigan castle and steward of Cardiganshire.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* 278, f. 45.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* f. 31d.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.* f. 96.

<sup>7</sup> Brown, p. 218. The actual roll (*M.A.* 771/18) gives considerably more information as to the liveries of moneys than does the printed roll, but there is no more information about these liveries for the chamber.

<sup>8</sup> Amongst liveries made to the chamber in 1352-53 were moneys collected from certain lands in Cheshire "in the lord's hands by reason of forfeiture" (*M.B.E., T.R.* 278, f. 57d). The year when large payments were made to the



a time both exchequer and wardrobe drafted supplies to the chamber,<sup>1</sup> but after 1354 the receiver-general alone received letters of allowance for sums delivered there. The largest total sum I have found for which allowance was made was £1562:5:2.<sup>2</sup> The resources of the chamber were also augmented by the assignation to it of the issues of certain manors.

The orders to the receiver and steward of the lands of the chamber which are included in the Black Prince's registers should reveal, when accessible in print, the number of his chamber manors. Amongst them were certainly the manors of Wisley and Byfleet in Surrey,<sup>3</sup> of Risborough in Buckinghamshire,<sup>4</sup> of Watlington in Oxfordshire.<sup>5</sup> Byfleet had been a chamber manor of Edward II.,<sup>6</sup> and was a favourite residence of Edward of Woodstock; Risborough was ancient demesne of the crown.<sup>7</sup> It is not clear

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chamber from Cheshire revenues was, moreover, the year of a Cheshire eyre, when forfeitures were probably numerous.

<sup>1</sup> For example, in 1352-53 (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 57, 58) and 1353-55 (*ib.* f. 95) allowances were warranted for moneys sent the chamber by the receiver-general, in 1355 (*ib.* f. 83) by the keeper of the wardrobe. <sup>2</sup> *Ib.* f. 231d.

<sup>3</sup> For Wisley see *ib.* f. 79d. An extent of this manor was made by Hugh Berwick, the prince's steward, some time before May 16, 1355. It came into the prince's hands by purchase in 1340 (*E.A.* 389/6). In 1345 and 1348 it, with the other Surrey possessions of the prince, was excepted from the operations of the Surrey commissioners for the collection of the current tenth and fifteenth (*C.C.R.*, 1343-46, p. 564; *ib.*, 1346-49, p. 566). The bailiffs of the manor of Wisley were often also bailiffs of Byfleet, e.g. John Hardwine (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 86), and William Pollo (*ib.* 91d), while the steward of the lands of the chamber was once known as "steward of our manors of Byfleet and Wisley" (*ib.* f. 35). The account of Wisley in *V.C.H. Surrey*, iii. p. 378, does not mention the connection with the Black Prince. In Oct. 1356 Wisley was granted for life to William St. Omer (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 109d).

For Byfleet see *ib.* f. 4d, also f. 105 (1356). The manor was granted the Black Prince in 1337, when he was created duke of Cornwall (*Report on the Dignity of a Peer*, v. p. 37). Also see *V.C.H. Surrey*, iii. p. 400. In 1355 the reeve of Byfleet and Wisley received an order which referred to the fishery of the river in the prince's park at Byfleet, which, by the advice of the council, was reserved for the expenses of his household (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 91d).

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* 278, f. 98d. The wardship of Risborough was granted the Black Prince in 1343 (*C.P.R.*, 1343-45, p. 115), but he continued to hold the manor till his death. It is said that the name of Prince's Risborough, by which the manor became known, was the result of the connection with the Black Prince (*V.C.H. Bucks*, ii. p. 262).

<sup>5</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144, f. 110 (Sept. 1347). Watlington had been held by both Richard and Edmund as earls of Cornwall (*Cal. Inq.* i. p. 274, iii. p. 464). Nicholas de la Beche held it before his death from the duke of Cornwall as of the honour of Wallingford, "whether in demesne as of fee or for life or a term of years, the jurors know not" (*ib.* viii. no. 574).

<sup>6</sup> See above, ii. p. 352.

<sup>7</sup> *V.C.H. Bucks*, ii. p. 261.

how long the prince's chamber of lands continued to function. It appears in 1347 and was active between 1351 and 1356; as late as 1360 the issues of the lordship of Denbigh, in the prince's hands through the minority of the heir, were to be delivered to the receiver of the chamber.<sup>1</sup> This temporary arrangement, though it testifies to the financial importance of the chamber, is not quite analogous to the system of reserved chamber manors. The chamber of lands does not seem to have attained any great importance, and was perhaps not very highly organised. John Alveton, steward of the lands of the chamber in 1355 and 1356,<sup>2</sup> was also at the same time lieutenant of the prince's steward of Wallingford and St. Valery,<sup>3</sup> and was frequently employed by both prince<sup>4</sup> and king<sup>5</sup> in Buckingham and neighbouring counties. He is, I think, the only such steward appearing in the registers. There is no indication of the relations of the chamber of lands to the chamber of the household; it is unlikely that the two were sharply differentiated in any but the king's household system.

The expenditure of the chamber is in some ways, but not all, reminiscent of the king's chamber. There were, for instance, as is seen in the earliest list of chamber payments, numerous disbursements on such amusements as gambling,<sup>6</sup> or the purchase of jewels and other finery;<sup>7</sup> sums were frequently paid out for the prince's "secret" expenses, for gifts to messengers and others, or for alms. Such matters, connected with the prince's requirements in his private and personal capacity, and not with his household or his official position, are characteristic of chamber expenditure in general. Other payments are very miscellaneous, for instance the rent of a house in Candlewick Street,<sup>8</sup> the cost

<sup>1</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 279, f. 208. Roger Mortimer, earl of March, died in Feb. 1360 (*Cal. Inq.* x. p. 640). His heir Edmund was then nine years old (*D.N.B.*).

<sup>2</sup> See appendix.

<sup>3</sup> *E.g. M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 30d, 99d, 193 (1352, 1355, 1360). The steward at this time was Bartholomew Burghersh junior (*ib.* f. 30d).

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* 4d, 6d, etc.

<sup>5</sup> *E.g.* as escheator of Oxfordshire, *C.P.R.*, 1350-54, p. 497.

<sup>6</sup> Above, p. 356.

<sup>7</sup> An interesting item, soon after the prince's marriage, is a button for his bride, which cost £200 (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 232). About the same time 6s. 8d. was spent on repairing a *corset* given by the queen to the princess. As much as £331 was paid at various times from the prince's chamber to that of his wife (*ib.*).

<sup>8</sup> See below, p. 396, n. 4.

of a new seal for use in Gascony, of diverse "instruments" for the prince's ship,<sup>1</sup> occasionally of repairs to the houses of his inn in Calais;<sup>2</sup> any of these might equally properly have been made by wardrobe or exchequer. It is certainly not possible to draw any clear distinction between the spheres of the prince's three central or itinerant financial departments, nor is it probable that contemporaries attempted to do so.

Very little can be found out about the officials of the chamber. Its lay head was, of course, the chamberlain, whose most frequent appearance is, with the steward, as a witness to formal letters.<sup>3</sup> He seems to have played little part in actual administration, though the splendour of the lord Edward's court at home and abroad rested in no small degree upon the prowess of the knightly element of his household.<sup>4</sup> His first chamberlain of whom I know, Richard Bere, was succeeded by 1351 by the famous and courtly Nigel Loring,<sup>5</sup> who held his position till 1374 at least. Though the valour of such men as he beams from the pages of Froissart, the record shows small trace of their achievement.

The administrative head of the chamber was probably the receiver, whose duties were primarily financial. On the royal analogy he may have had a secretarial capacity also, if the prince's secret seal was the instrument of the chamber and was in his custody.<sup>6</sup> But we have little indication of his practical duties; his name rarely occurs in the lists of allowances for payments in the chamber, for instance. It is not even certain that the office existed throughout the prince's life; only from 1351 to 1353 and about 1360 does it faintly emerge from obscurity. A treasurer of the chamber is also mentioned on one occasion.<sup>7</sup> It seems probable that the office of receiver came into existence in connection with the chamber of lands.<sup>8</sup> Henry Blackburn, perhaps the first

<sup>1</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 97d.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* 95d.

<sup>3</sup> See appendix.

<sup>4</sup> A list of bachelors of the chamber could perhaps be made when the calendars of the prince's later registers are published (*e.g. ib.* f. 50d).

<sup>5</sup> See appendix; and for Loring, Beltz, *Memorials of the Garter*, and *D.N.B.*

<sup>6</sup> See below, p. 381.

<sup>7</sup> See appendix.

<sup>8</sup> In June 1351 the auditors of his accounts were ordered to acquit the receiver-general of any sums received from lands assigned to the chamber, which were in future to be answered for by the receiver of the chamber (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 10); thus it would seem that an administrative innovation had been made; yet lands had been assigned to the chamber as early as 1347 (above, p. 357).



receiver, was ordained by the advice of the council to be "our receiver of our moneys arising from all the lands and profits assigned to our chamber by the hands of our said clerk Henry, or another of our *privetz* in his absence, as well in the exchequer of our dear lord and father the king as elsewhere."<sup>1</sup> Thus he had perhaps supreme authority over the chamber manors; he certainly paid expenses in connection with them.

Only two names of receivers are known to us, the clerks Henry Blackburn and John Henxteworth.<sup>2</sup> Both may have been connected with the chamber as early as 1348.<sup>3</sup> Blackburn was certainly controller of the household for part of the time he was receiver, and Henxteworth may possibly have been so also;<sup>4</sup> he may also have kept the privy seal for a time while he was receiver.<sup>5</sup> Such combinations of office illustrate how little differentiation or physical separation there can have been in actual practice between the various parts of the household, between chamber and wardrobe, or chamber and secretarial office.

In 1355 and 1356 another official makes a short-lived appearance, the steward of the lands of the chamber.<sup>6</sup> His relation to the receiver is obscure (nor is it certain that the two existed contemporaneously); possibly he served as a link between the central chamber and the bailiffs of the manors, as in the royal chamber of lands. His preoccupation with other business shows that this particular stewardship was not exacting in its demands.<sup>6</sup> The names of occasional ushers of the chamber also survive.<sup>7</sup>

Since the prince's chamber was not much concerned with the prosecution of the war, it had not the same need for a storehouse of bulky commodities as had the king's chamber. I cannot trace any connection between the chamber and the prince's "chamber of arms" or privy wardrobe. Yet it is very possible

<sup>1</sup> *M.B.E., T.R.* 278, f. 10.

<sup>2</sup> See appendix.

<sup>3</sup> *M.B.E., T.R.* 278, f. 45d. In that year, 1348, Blackburn and Henxteworth, amongst others, made frequent payments to the prince for play.

<sup>4</sup> Henxteworth was controller of the household abroad in 1355; it is not known who was controller in 1360. In 1359, however, Alexander Ongar was controller.

<sup>5</sup> See appendix.

<sup>6</sup> See above, p. 359.

<sup>7</sup> *E.g.* Thomelyn Florac, usher in Aquitaine in 1365 (*Arch. hist. Gir.* vi. p. 370. Also below, p. 362, n. 2).

that some headquarters were at one time found for the chamber ; there was certainly a room called " the prince's chamber " in the palace of Westminster.<sup>1</sup>

The Black Prince's chamber never reached as influential a position in his administrative system as did that of his father in national business. Though less highly developed and even less clearly marked off from the offices of wardrobe and exchequer, it resembled the king's chamber in its main characteristics. It, too, was a privy purse, making similar payments and receiving similar revenues for its needs ; it, too, aimed at performing the same administrative work, notably through the chamber of lands ; it, too, very possibly possessed a seal and secretariat. As a privy purse it was well developed by 1346, as a chamber of lands by 1351. After 1355, a notable date in the decline of the king's chamber system, the prince's chamber of lands disappears from view. The chamber of the household was still in existence in 1363, and probably for the rest of the prince's life.<sup>2</sup> Though somewhat later in point of time, the history of the prince's chamber followed a similar curve of development, rising and falling, to that followed by the chamber of his father.

It would be impossible to assess with any accuracy the total revenue which passed through these central financial organisations of exchequer, wardrobe and chamber. Nor indeed would such a figure have much significance, for the practice of assignment was extensively used by the prince as by his father. Assignments would have to be considered, as well as the local expenditure of his subordinate financial departments, in any attempt to estimate his complete income and expenditure. His most permanent and stable source of income was his landed estate, and this undoubtedly increased in productivity, at least for the time

<sup>1</sup> In an account concerning the king's works within the palace of Westminster (under the date of April 16, 1354) is a payment to workmen for doing repairs in the prince's chamber, and also " in muro celarii in hospicio domini principis " (*E.A.* 471/6). Under Henry IV., Henry VI. and Henry VIII. there are various references to the prince's palace, or the prince's council chamber. I am indebted to Miss I. M. Cooper for pointing out these references. This prince's chamber is said to have been named from its association with the Black Prince (Stubbs, *C.H.* iii. p. 398).

<sup>2</sup> Richard Wiltshire was usher of the chamber in December 1371 (*C.P.R.*, 1374-77, p. 343). A grant from the chamber for life, no longer effective after the prince's death, was renewed from the exchequer (*ib.* p. 308).

being,<sup>1</sup> through the steady pressure of his vigilant central administration. A valuation of his lands was made on the king's writ by his old servants after his death,<sup>2</sup> in connection with the allocation of his widow's dower.<sup>3</sup> Owing to the considerable fluctuations in income from year to year, an average was struck from the revenues of the three years 1372-75. As a result North Wales was shown to produce an income of approximately £3000, South Wales nearly £1700, Cheshire, Flint and Macclesfield, some £1300, Cornwall some £2350, while the various English possessions together were valued at £300 odd. Thus the lands apparently produced approximately some £8600 annually at the time of his death.

The inadequacy of the prince's income from his territorial possessions was mitigated at times by supplementary doles from the parental purse, not to mention gifts in kind, like wax and wine, or such a privilege, commonly granted, as that of receiving chancery documents free of charge. As early as 1336 an additional £500 a year had to be allowed to the young earl of Chester.<sup>4</sup> From 1361 an annual payment of 200 marks was granted to the prince from the customs of London,<sup>5</sup> and though the claims of the royal household jeopardised his portion, he secured a good part of it.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is possible that the exactions of the prince's ministers retarded the economic progress of his lands. See, for example, H. J. Hewitt, *Mediaeval Cheshire*, p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> *Chanc. Misc.* 9/57. A scrutiny of the accounts of the prince's lands for the three years before his death was made by his acting executors (see below, p. 397), by two of the auditors of his ministers' accounts and by the most important local officials. This roll was then drawn up to show the average receipts from every source of income in each locality on the basis of the preceding three years, and certain permanent expenses were deducted. There are various difficulties in the interpretation of the roll into which I cannot enter here.

<sup>3</sup> Each parcel of land assigned to Joan in dower (*C.P.R.*, 1374-77, pp. 374-376, Oct. 13, 1376) was then valued at precisely the same figure that is given in this general valuation of the prince's lands (*Chanc. Misc.* 9/57). Moreover, the grant of dower itself refers to the findings in chancery made by the prince's executors, auditors, justices and chamberlains, viz. to this very roll of valuation.

<sup>4</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1333-37, p. 625. £250 came to the earl from Paul de Monte Florum, £250 from the Bardi.

<sup>5</sup> *C.P.R.*, 1361-64, p. 163. This grant was, however, in compensation for 200 marks which the earl of Salisbury had been given from the coinage of the stannary of Cornwall.

<sup>6</sup> The prince complained of the non-payment of his 200 marks at a time when all the London customs were reserved for the expenses of the king's household, and inquiries were set on foot on his behalf (*M.R.*, *K.R.* 152, *brevia directa baronibus*, Mich. m. 13 and m. 23, Nov. 1375). The results are incorporated in a roll of customs accounts (*E.* 122/193/19), which shows the prince's



Much larger sums were also on occasion allotted to the prince, as, for example, many thousands of pounds from the ransom of king John of France ;<sup>1</sup> he received many of these sums safely, and probably spent them on Gascon necessities.<sup>2</sup> Despite his regular income and such occasional grants in addition, the prince was driven to borrow from his friends and servants ;<sup>3</sup> he shared with other magnates of the day an incapacity to make both ends meet and an inability to attempt the adjustment of expenditure to income. The suggested wealth of his epitaph bears small relation to his actual financial position.<sup>4</sup> His insolvency was not necessarily, however, merely the result of conspicuous extravagance in an age of luxuriant and expensive pageantry, for his obligations, especially abroad, were in themselves crippling.

The Black Prince's financial arrangements abroad became of political, of military, of national significance, and our inevitable ignorance of their administrative basis is thus the more tantalising. No ready explanation can be forthcoming, as we have already

receipts from this source between Mich. 1361 and Nov. 4, 1375. He actually received £1000, and it was admitted that he was owed another £866 : 13 : 4. See also *Foreign Roll*, 9. m. 56. This grant from the customs was renewed in favour of Richard prince of Wales, after his father's death (*M.R.*, *K.R.* 153, *brevia directa baronibus*, Trinity, m. 8d).

<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of the payment of John's ransom see Dr. Broome's article in *Camden Miscellany*, xiv. The prince was assigned £60,000 from the ransom in 1362, for which letters of acquittance under notarial authority were duly given by Adam Bury, merchant of London (*ib.* pp. x, xi). Bury was ordered to pay £10,000 from John's ransom to Lacy, the prince's receiver-general, in Feb. 1363 (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 255d). Less important missions of Bury in Paris were to buy bargains in velvet and embroidery of swans with ladies' heads (*ib.* f. 257d). The prince was apparently later allotted another £60,000, for which no quittance is extant (*Camden Miscellany*, *loc. cit.* p. xiii). Apart from these contributions the king gave him directly a share of the French treasure that he had himself secured: thus 5000 marks as a prest came to his hands in 1362 (*ib.* p. 17), and 10,000 marks were paid out to him in March 1361 (*ib.* p. 24), while £20,000 was granted him later, of which at least a part was paid (*ib.* p. 12, also inset Va).

<sup>2</sup> *E.g.* *Camden Miscellany*, *loc. cit.* p. 38. Amongst the foreign receipts of the constables of Bordeaux and treasurer of Aquitaine in 1362-70 is a figure of over £20,000 Guiennois received from the ransom of the king of France, but there is no information as to how or when this was paid (Delpit, p. 175).

<sup>3</sup> In 1359, on the eve of his departure for the continent, the prince bound himself to repay John Wingfield and others as much as 20,000 marks (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 183d).

<sup>4</sup> En terre avoy grand richesse, dont je y fys grand noblesse  
Terre, mesons et grand treshor, etc.

Nichols, *Royal Wills*, p. 68.

seen, of how his campaigns of 1355 and 1356 were financed.<sup>1</sup> His financial resources as prince of Aquitaine with his obligations of government, diplomacy and warfare, are still more obscure. Even the normal sources of information disappear and only the elaborate rolls of Richard Fillongley survive amidst the English archives to illuminate the prince's rule. This careful but ill-rewarded servant of the prince, "son petit serviteur,"<sup>2</sup> compiled a synoptic survey of Gascon revenues for the whole period of the principality,<sup>3</sup> a very "thermometer of victory,"<sup>4</sup> from which something may be learnt of Gascony.<sup>5</sup> It does not, however,

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 346.

<sup>2</sup> *A.P.* 333, no. 27.

<sup>3</sup> Three accounts of Richard Fillongley survive in the Public Record Office for the period of the principality, viz. *E.A.* 177/1 (36-44 Edward III., printed by J. Delpit in his *Collection générale des documents français qui se trouvent en Angleterre*, no. cxxiv.); also *E.A.* 177/9 and 10 (dealing with the years 37-44 Edward III.); the former is printed by Delpit, *loc. cit.* p. 132, and the latter appears to be a duplicate. The accounts traverse much the same ground; all were obviously compiled from the annual accounts sometime after Mich. 1370, and all include both receipts and expenses. They are in tabular form; in *E.A.* 177/1 the years are shown in vertical columns and the receipts and expenses horizontally across the page; in *E.A.* 177/9 and 10 the receipts and expenses are tabulated in detail and separately, the years being shown horizontally across the page. Another Gascon account of Fillongley's also survives (*E.A.* 179/9); his counter-roll as controller of the castle of Bordeaux running from Oct. 19, 1372, to Aug. 19, 1373, viz. after the end of the principality. I do not know what precise position Fillongley held between 1362 and 1370, nor what was the purpose of the complicated rolls he compiled, or their relation to each other. He was certainly not seneschal of Guienne throughout the period as suggested in *P.R.O., Lists and Indexes*, xxxv. p. 132, nor do I think he was treasurer of Aquitaine (Delpit, Introduction, pp. cxxvii, cxxxi, etc., where some account is also given of these rolls), for other names of constables of Bordeaux and treasurers of Aquitaine occur throughout these years. He probably filled some subordinate rôle; in 1367 he was *familiaris* of William Spridlington, auditor of accounts in Aquitaine (*Gasc.* 83, m. 9); in 1370 he was made *serjeant general* in Bordeaux for life (*Gasc.* 87, m. 6, also 88, m. 2). Moreover, in 1375, his continuous service in the prince's household is mentioned (*ib.* 88, m. 2).

<sup>4</sup> Delpit, p. cxxxiv.

<sup>5</sup> An analysis of Fillongley's figures is given in Delpit, Introduction. Richard Fillongley was not only responsible for these surveys of Gascon revenues, but also for the detailed account of the prince's progress through Gascony, receiving homage, on his arrival in the principality (printed in Delpit, no. xcii.; also see Lodge, *Gascony under English Rule*, pp. 98-99), which also survives in duplicate. Fillongley is not conspicuous in the prince's administration before 1363, and it was his services in Gascony (see n. 3 above) which earned him the prince's gratitude. The grant to Fillongley of certain customs on wine in the castle of Bordeaux, by the prince, was subsequently confirmed by Richard II. up to the sum of £200 a year but no further (*Gasc.* 91, m. 15), while Edward III. in 1374-75 confirmed other grants made him (*Gasc.* 87, m. 6; 88, m. 2). Fillongley continued to serve the king in Gascony after the principality ended; he was controller of the castle of Bordeaux, under John Ludham as treasurer of

reveal the extent of financial assistance given the prince for the prosecution of what was in effect the king's business, nor does it cast much light on the prince's household itself. We must remain ignorant of what resources were actually available for the government of Gascony, and incidentally for the upkeep of the household, though we know that lack of funds led to crushing taxation and that the prince's financial affairs became a political question of great moment, the spark which lit the renewed conflagration of the war with France. Local revenues were not the only sums at his disposal : he received large drafts both from the royal exchequer and from his personal domains in England.<sup>1</sup> The treasury of Bordeaux remained the financial centre of the principality, the main channel into which the diverse streams of income naturally flowed, and its accounts were audited by auditors commissioned by the prince for that purpose.<sup>2</sup> The actual presence in Gascony of the prince's household and the financial departments following his person perhaps complicated, but did not obliterate, the powers of the permanent localised department.

Continuity of administrative method on the whole marked the principality of Aquitaine, despite the introduction of a new element in government in the prince's household. Some over-

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Aquitaine, from Oct. 17, 1372, to Aug. 19, 1373, by appointment of the seneschal Thomas Felton (*E.A.* 179/9), but later returned to the prince's service in England. He asked that his wages, probably as auditor, should be increased from 18d. a day by 6d. a day as from Dec. 3, 1374, for they were already greatly in arrear, and he was impoverished (*A.P.* 333, no. 27). The petition was presumably not granted, for he had occasion to beseech the council that he might receive arrears of wages at 18d. a day from Michaelmas 1375 to Easter 1376 ; he had been put to great expense in Cornwall, Devon and South Wales on the business of the accounts, and " nad de quoi uncore pur susteiner son pover estat " (*ib.* no. 25). He is elsewhere mentioned as an auditor of the accounts of Cornish ministers (*E.A.* 812/14), and, as an auditor of ministers' accounts, assisted in the compilation of the valuation of the prince's lands for dower purposes (*Chanc. Misc.* 9/57). Fillongley was granted an annuity from Chester revenues in July 1374 (*M.A.* 772/10). In April 1392 he delivered two rolls concerning the rents and profits of the duchy (*sic*) of Aquitaine into the exchequer (Palgrave, *Kalendars and Inventories*, ii. p. 43).

<sup>1</sup> Delpit, p. 175. This is the most valuable part of Fillongley's account (*E.A.* 177/9 and 10) from our point of view, for it gives items of the " foreign receipt " of the constables of Bordeaux and treasurers of Aquitaine. See also Brantingham's *Issue Roll* for liveries to the prince from the English exchequer by the hands of Peter Lacy.

<sup>2</sup> *Gasc.* 91, m. 6 and 9. William Spridlington was an auditor in Oct. 1367 (*Gasc.* 83, m. 9, 94, m. 13). For other possible treasury officials see above, p. 334.



lapping must inevitably have occurred, and, of course, no hard and fast distinctions can ever have been made between the local and the domestic machinery. In some ways there was an almost confusing similarity: for instance, each received drafts from the prince's English lands,<sup>1</sup> and each from the actual revenues of Gascony.<sup>2</sup> Only a fraction, however, of the local receipts were handed over to the household for its upkeep,<sup>3</sup> and there is no indication of any princely domain making direct contribution to the prince's personal needs.<sup>4</sup> Two treasurers of Aquitaine had previously been treasurers of the prince's household, a fact which reveals the relative importance of the two positions.<sup>5</sup> Of the household's sphere as a spending department, nothing is known except an isolated and somewhat unhelpful figure.<sup>6</sup> The one certain fact which emerges from the general obscurity is that the status in financial affairs of the household in Gascony was greatly inferior to its status in England, where the developed and localised household controlled in the last instance all the prince's English revenues.

The Black Prince's central secretarial organisation was probably less penetrating than his financial organisation in its control of local usage. Of course the prince's personal seals were authoritative throughout his lands, but in theory his will was not necessarily executed through any one channel, and in practice the local chanceries retained some little independence from centralised control. The seals of Wales and Chester, probably of Gascony also, were used for certain matters of routine without the interposition of any mandate under the prince's personal seals. In Cheshire, for example, original and judicial writs and grants of minor importance were normally issued under the Chester seal

<sup>1</sup> Delpit, pp. 175 and 176.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.*, also pp. 136, 140, etc.

<sup>3</sup> The household received each year sums varying from rather over £1000 Guiennois (1370) to more than £37,000 (1369) from the issues of the seneschalcy of Bordeaux during the period 1362-70 (Delpit, p. 136).

<sup>4</sup> Compare Delpit, p. cxxxvi.

<sup>5</sup> Alan Stokes and John Carleton.

<sup>6</sup> The expenses of the household in the time of Hugh Barton and Alan Stokes as treasurers, an indeterminable period, amounted to over £211,772 Guiennois (Delpit, p. 176), but the information on this roll is not complete. (For the difficulties of arriving at any definite financial conclusions from it see *ib.*, Introduction, p. cxxxiii, etc.)

without any warrant, but the local seal was active in a much wider sphere when operating on the verbal order or written instructions of the prince's itinerant councillors or on a warrant under one of the prince's personal seals. In the possession of this dual aspect, that is, independent departmental work coupled with controlled activities, the prince's local chanceries of course resembled the national chancery.<sup>1</sup> It is noticeable that though the prince's central secretarial departments might direct and support the operation of the local seals, they rarely usurped their functions. Thus, for example, a pardon or a protection, or a grant of Cheshire land in favour of a Cestrian was authorised by the prince's privy seal, but it had to be formally issued under the Chester seal, whereas if the recipient hailed from Cornwall or one of the English manors, a letter of privy seal itself conferred the intended gift. Appointments similarly were normally, but not invariably, made by the prince's Chester seal on warrant from his privy seal.<sup>2</sup> In consideration of secretarial organisation it must always be remembered that central institutions held a different place in relation to Chester, Wales and Gascony from that which they held in relation to Cornwall or the prince's lands in England.

There can be little doubt that the Black Prince never possessed a great seal as a part of the organisation of his household or its offshoots.<sup>3</sup> The surviving registers of his

<sup>1</sup> The resemblance, however, is general and did not extend to details. The departmental sphere of the Chester chancery was not the same as that of the English chancery; in the time of the Black Prince, for instance, no presentations to churches were made under the Chester seal on its independent authority, as they were issued by the English chancery when the living had only a small value. Similarly, few letters concerned with the tenure of the earl of Chester's lands were issued at Chester without warrant. For the departmental activities of the English chancery without warrant see B. Wilkinson, "Authorisation of Chancery Writs under Edward III.," *Bull. J.R.L.* viii. p. 125.

<sup>2</sup> These conclusions cannot be applied to Cheshire in the time of Richard II., when practice varied.

<sup>3</sup> I deal with this question at length in an article on "The Administrative Chancery of the Black Prince before 1362" in *Essays presented to T. F. Tout*, and therefore merely repeat my conclusions here for the sake of completeness. The privy seal organisation is described in the same article. I find no evidence that there was any essential change in the Black Prince's sealing arrangements in England after 1362. I am satisfied that the great seal which he acquired in that year was used only in Gascony, and was in fact, to all intents and purposes, a local seal analogous to the seals of Chester and Wales, though more imposing in its external attributes. The intricacy of Gascon sealing arrangements during the principality are indicated above, pp. 302-305; the diplomatic of the prince's great seal, used in Gascony, is sketched below, part ii.

letters give no hint of its existence, and it is there, above all, that some trace of its operations would be found. A chancellor was never conspicuous among the prince's ministers, and the name is rarely used, and then merely to describe the keeper of the privy seal.<sup>1</sup> The actual seals which survive bear out the same conclusion that the prince had no great seal for general use. The local seals were equivalent to a great seal, and their existence certainly made the possession of another great seal in the prince's central organisation unnecessary. But no such purely utilitarian reason can completely explain the non-existence of a great seal. The same reason would have applied to Edward of Carnarvon in similar circumstances, and he undoubtedly had a great seal. The truth seems to be that, in the fourteenth century, it was becoming unusual for a magnate to have a great seal except in a localised franchise, and that a privy seal, frequently described as the seal, was normally used for all general purposes.<sup>2</sup>

As the prince had no great seal, the work of his privy seal, or seal as it was more rarely described,<sup>3</sup> was, of course, rather different from that of the king's privy seal. The sphere of original jurisdiction of the prince's privy seal was more comprehensive throughout England as a whole, and included every kind of business, but in Chester, Wales and Gascony the powers of the privy seal were limited along certain traditional lines, and it was frequently used merely to warrant the application of the local seal. This dual nature of the privy seal was, of course, reflected in the diplomatic of the instruments issued under it : for example, because it sometimes authenticated the most solemn acts, it is found suspended

<sup>1</sup> I may now add another instance of the keeper of the privy seal being called chancellor to those given in *Essays presented to T. F. Tout*, *loc. cit.* pp. 326-327 ; John Hale is called clerk and chancellor in September 1353 in a papal petition (*C. Pap. Reg. Pet.* i. p. 251).

<sup>2</sup> This is certainly true of Henry, duke of Lancaster, and of John of Gaunt (see Professor Baldwin's article on "The Chancery of the Duchy of Lancaster," *Bull. I.H.R.* iv., especially pp. 132-133, 136-137). Isabella, daughter of Edward III., described a small single-faced seal of red wax, apparently a privy seal, as "her seal" (*A.C.* xl. 187); so did Joanna, queen of Scotland, Edward III.'s sister (*Exch. T.R., Anc. D., W.S.* 96). Queen Philippa used a privy seal in the same way (*Chanc. Misc.* 9/58 : *E.* 122, *K.R.* 70/19, writs concerning the accounts of collectors of customs), but see above, p. 288.

<sup>3</sup> For the identity of these two seals see *Essays presented to T. F. Tout*, *loc. cit.*



by silken strings in a manner perhaps rarely used in the king's privy seal department<sup>1</sup> though characteristic of the national chancery.<sup>2</sup>

The lord Edward's privy seal was, it is clear, his chief household seal ; it was the most authoritative seal of universal applicability at his command, although it was customarily used merely as a warrant for certain business within certain localities. The privy seal department was thus virtually his chancery, and the keeper of the privy seal in effect his chancellor. Such nominal distinctions might have had little real importance, but it is a striking fact that the clerks who kept the privy seal were inconspicuous people of no great position amongst his ministers. Times had changed since the days of the magnate chancellors of Edward of Carnarvon as prince of Wales ; their descendants in office had lost importance, and the governor of the prince's business, a knight and layman, was now the prince's foremost minister.<sup>3</sup> The privy seal would seem indeed never to have acquired much independent activity ; its use was normally authorised by the prince himself, by a minister, by the council or a group of councillors. The council, with its increasing activity, remained throughout the prince's life the mainspring of his administrative system ; and every department, especially that of the privy seal, was permeated by its influence.

Among the most interesting features of the registers of the prince's letters are the notes of warrant recorded after many of the entries. A close study of these can best be made when the registers appear in print, and a comparison of all letters issued without warrant may show what business, if any, normally fell completely within the province of the keeper of the privy seal, in which he could act on his independent authority. These memoranda of warrant bear a striking resemblance to those used in the king's chancery, with the conspicuous omission, of course, of regular references to warrants under the privy seal. When the prince was abroad, however, he frequently authorised the issue of letters at home by warrants under the privy seal he had with him.

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 127, n. 2.

<sup>2</sup> I deal with the details of diplomatic usage in the Black Prince's various secretariats separately in part ii. below, at the risk of a certain amount of inevitable overlapping.

<sup>3</sup> See below, p. 388.

In such cases the note of warrant varied between such phrases as "by letters of privy seal" (1346 and 1363), "by letter of the lord under the seal in Gascony" (1357), "by letter from Gascony" (1365), "by letter of warrant under the privy seal of Gascony" (1363), etc. In normal cases the note of warrant may record a written order as "by bill endorsed by the council," "by warrant of the signet," "by letter of secret seal," or more frequently a verbal order, "by command of the lord himself,"<sup>1</sup> "by the advice of the council," "by the advice and command of John Wingfield," "by the advice of Stafford and Delves," and so on. Departmental notes of warrant also survive; for instance, in the warrant of a letter ordering swans for the celebration of the feast of the Trinity to be delivered to the clerk of the kitchen "by the advice of the steward and treasurer of the household." The considerable influence wielded by the more conspicuous members of the council is amply demonstrated by the inclusion of their names in notes of warrant, notably that of Wingfield before 1361 and of Stafford and Delves after 1362; Peter Lacy's name rarely occurs,<sup>2</sup> which shows that it was not merely ministerial position that gave authority to move the seal.

One original note is struck amongst the notes of warrant in the prince's registers by the appearance of the warrant *signee de homout, ich dene*.<sup>3</sup> I have not found this phrase in use before 1364,<sup>4</sup> and then only with reference to warrants sent from Gascony. All warrants from Gascony were not, however, authorised in this way. This note of warrant refers to a secret cipher, formed of the prince's mottoes, and written by the prince's own hand on the original letters of warrant.<sup>5</sup> The words are now famous: they

<sup>1</sup> Or even some such phrase as "by command of the lord himself in the presence of Richard Stafford, John Delves and many others."

<sup>2</sup> And then merely in association with several other councillors.

<sup>3</sup> E.g. *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 273. Other forms are "by warrant of the privy seal with *homout ich dene*" (*ib.* 280, f. 123d) or "by warrant of the signet signed with *homout ich dene*" (*ib.* f. 126).

<sup>4</sup> There is, however, a possibility that the warrant was in use as early as 1360-61, as the late Sir Israel Gollancz points out. See p. 372, n. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Edward III.'s use of *pater sancte* on papal letters (*E.H.R.* xxvi. pp. 331-332). The suggestion that the prince wrote the cipher himself, previously hypothetical, has recently been proved by the discovery at the Record Office of a warrant which refers to a letter surviving in *Chanc. Misc.* 34/1/2 (P.R.O. Museum, Pedestal 2) as "signee de sa propre main" (*C.W.* i. 466/1376). The prince is known to have himself written at least one order under the secret

apparently mean "high courage" and "I serve," but it is hardly our concern here to examine their origin.<sup>1</sup>

At no stage of its history is much known of the organisation of the prince's secretarial office.<sup>2</sup> The privy seal appears by March 1334 and perhaps earlier; the wardrobe, with which it was probably associated, had existed since the lord Edward's infancy.<sup>3</sup> The seal first acquired importance when its owner became keeper of England in 1338; it was the instrument used by him, for example, in warrants to the chancery and exchequer,<sup>4</sup> and there was thus no question, either now or in his subsequent guardianships, of the creation of a special regent's seal as in the case of his brothers Lionel and Thomas.<sup>5</sup> In 1340, while the duke of Cornwall was regent, this privy seal was frequently called "the seal," and was in the custody of a "keeper of the seal." Subsequently it was certainly kept by the controller of the household;<sup>6</sup> after 1344 the two offices were finally separated. It is significant that about the same date the prince's exchequer was separated from the wardrobe; pressure of business was too insistent, after the principality of Wales was given to him, to be supported by the old organisation of the household.

It is not possible to define at all precisely the relations between

seal (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 81). The prince's intelligence is commented on in 1352:

"What he was yongeste of yeris and yareste of witt  
That any wy in this werlde wiste of his age!"

*Winner and Waster*, ed. I. Gollancz, ll. 119-120.

<sup>1</sup> Sir Israel Gollancz wrote an account of the Black Prince's use of the words *homout* and *ich dene* (*Some observations on a manuscript of the life and feats of arms of Edward Prince of Wales, the Black Prince*). He was, I think, mistaken in assuming that the prince's cipher was always necessary on a letter from Gascony destined to warrant the issue of further letters patent in England. (See, for instance, *Recog.* 45, m. 1, where a letter under the privy seal from Gascony authorises the chamberlain of Chester to issue letters of pardon under the Chester seal; no note of warrant is, however, recorded.) It is probable that the letter to which he refers authorised letters of warrant under the seal used in England, and did not move the palatinate seal directly, as he suggests (see below, p. 375).

<sup>2</sup> I here summarise my conclusions in *Essays presented to T. F. Tout*, *loc. cit.*

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 314.

<sup>4</sup> *C.W.* i. 1532, 1533, 1534; Exchequer Warrants of Issue 4/24 and 25.

<sup>5</sup> Nor did the keeper of the prince's seal as regent subsequently attain the pre-eminence of men like Simon Islip, the keeper of Lionel's seal as regent (see above, pp. 23-27).

<sup>6</sup> See above, p. 317.



the seal and the wardrobe, nor to decide when the seal was first fully "out of court." As early as 1340 the seal and the seal keeper were sometimes away from the lord Edward for weeks at a time; later the keeper's wages were apparently only paid for such times as he was without the household.<sup>1</sup> In 1340 there was already at least one clerk-subordinate of the keeper of the seal. From December 1353, if not earlier, an allowance was made to the keeper of the seal for the rent of a house while he was kept in London on the prince's business. This was perhaps a dwelling-place rather than an office,<sup>2</sup> for the keepers also had an annual allowance for boat-hire between the city and Westminster. The seal was certainly sometimes used in the prince's exchequer at Westminster, where the records of the seal were also sometimes kept.<sup>3</sup> It cannot be assumed that the association with the wardrobe was necessarily broken and that the seal was fully out of court by the time that the seal department had a *hospicium* in the city, for the seal certainly continued to follow the prince in his chief journeys through England,<sup>4</sup> even as late as 1363.<sup>5</sup> The inevitable division of administration when the prince was participating in foreign campaigns probably made some London headquarters a necessity, and should be considered as an important factor in the evolution of the independent secretarial department.

The habit of systematic record-keeping testifies to the early efficiency and elaboration of the prince's privy seal office. The earliest register which survives begins in 1346, but some record of letters issued was certainly kept before that date.<sup>6</sup> By 1351 the letters sent out were so numerous that the contents of the

<sup>1</sup> Compare the position in the king's privy seal department (above, p. 83).

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 67, etc., for a discussion of the household and office of the king's privy seal.

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 333.

<sup>4</sup> For instance, the seal went to Cheshire in 1353, to Cornwall in 1354, and on the prince's journeys abroad it accompanied him to the port of embarkation, whence it returned to London. On the prince's return from Gascony in 1357 he probably used the seal he had used abroad on the journey to London from Plymouth; the latter was then used in London instead of the smaller seal which had been used in England during his absence.

<sup>5</sup> When it went to Plymouth on the prince's departure for the principality of Aquitaine. The prince did not leave England till June (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278), not February, as the *D.N.B.* says.

<sup>6</sup> A search was once made amongst the "copies of the letters of warrant" for a letter dated Sept. 1345 (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 158d).

register had to be divided between several volumes, each dealing with one geographical area. Towards 1364, however, their contents are again diminishing, which is not surprising since they were as much as two and a half years in arrear. Special arrangements were, however, made to bring them up to date, but these could hardly have been completely successful. From 1353 registration was the duty of a clerk appointed for that purpose and to write for the seal in general.<sup>1</sup>

The prince's first extended foreign visit was at the time of the Crécy-Calais campaign, and some little information as to his secretarial arrangements on that occasion fortunately survives. One seal remained at Westminster in the care of the keeper of the prince's exchequer, and a clerk was allotted to write letters under it, while another seal, probably in the custody of the keeper of the privy seal, accompanied the prince abroad. Both were called privy seals, though the former was also sometimes called the seal. Letters under the privy seal abroad sometimes warranted the issue of letters under the seal at home. When the prince went to Gascony in 1355, the keeper of the privy seal apparently remained in England, and the seal in his custody does not seem to have been kept in the exchequer. A special seal was made for use in Gascony; this was usually called "the seal" or "the seal used in Gascony," but sometimes "the privy seal" or "the seal pendant."<sup>2</sup> Its authority was coequal with that of the seal at Westminster, unlike that of the privy seal used abroad after 1363.

Little is known of the secretarial arrangements in England during the prince's long sojourn in Aquitaine from 1363 to 1371. Two privy seals were then in use, one abroad and one at home, but the latter was frequently called "the seal" as well as "privy seal," and seems to have been regarded as the normal instrument for English business. Letters from Gascony might authorise its use, but did not in themselves, apparently, always have direct force. When the Black Prince, in 1370, wished to grant one of his followers an annuity from Chester revenues, he wrote to his officials in London ordering them to issue the necessary letters

<sup>1</sup> See appendix.

<sup>2</sup> For an account of this seal see my article on "A Jodrell deed and the seals of the Black Prince" in *Bull. J.R.L.* vii.

patent.<sup>1</sup> Possibly the chamberlain of Chester was in his turn addressed by these officials and ordered to make the payment;<sup>2</sup> possibly their letters, under the prince's seal in their keeping, themselves constituted the grant; in either case the prince's personal letter was not alone effective. The chief point of interest, however, is that the prince addressed his warrant, not to any one official as the custodian of the seal, but to Richard Stafford, Peter Lacy and John Henxteworth jointly. Henxteworth was possibly still keeper of the seal; Lacy was certainly receiver-general;<sup>3</sup> Stafford's position is obscure, but he was presumably still a foremost member of the prince's council. Thus the prince's governmental system would seem to have been carried on in his absence with all due safeguards against ministerial irresponsibility, and on a co-operative basis, if it is not unwise to generalise from an isolated letter. Here, as on other occasions, we see the influence of the prince's council as the bedrock of his administrative system.

The sphere of authority of the Black Prince's personal seals used in Gascony must remain indeterminate until the functions of the local Gascon seals are more clearly revealed. The normal and established usage of the country was continued, and this in itself makes secretarial organisation more difficult to understand and brings it into contrast with English custom. Throughout southern France a private contract was not necessarily valid in law unless endorsed by some public authority; hence arose the development of a complex notarial system. The fact that in Gascony even ducal and official communications were sometimes reissued under local seals of jurisdiction suggests the influence of the same idea. Notaries also were themselves numerous in Gascony, and the prince had his own notaries there.<sup>4</sup> The more important inhabited the little *botege* which clustered round the great gates

<sup>1</sup> *Chanc. Misc.* 34/1/2.

<sup>2</sup> The Chester recognisance roll for this year, which might be expected to contain the enrolment of such a grant, if made by the chamberlain, and possibly the letter of warrant also, does not, unfortunately, survive. From earlier recognisance rolls it is clear that the seal in London was the normal instrument to warrant the issue of letters under the Chester seal, although the privy seal in Gascony was occasionally used on such letters directed to the chamberlain of Chester.

<sup>3</sup> See appendix to this section.

<sup>4</sup> *E.g. Arch. hist. Gir.* xxix. p. 383; *Foedera*, iii. p. 821.



of the castle of the Ombrière at Bordeaux, the centre of the government of both duchy and principality.<sup>1</sup>

The seal of the court of Gascony and the seals for contracts are the most conspicuous of the local seals in use in Gascony.<sup>2</sup> With them should be classed the prince's great seal of Aquitaine, the status of which is by no means clear. Its activities were limited to the principality ;<sup>3</sup> when the prince returned to England it was left behind ;<sup>4</sup> its custodian, the chancellor, was one of the prince's most prominent local officials, and a man of some local knowledge. Both John Streatley and John Harewell, for example, had previously been constables of Bordeaux.<sup>5</sup> In his later

<sup>1</sup> *E.A.* 179/8.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 302. The local seals used in towns were a source of some confusion in England. See Thomas, *Calendar of Plea and Memoranda Rolls of the City of London*, ii. pp. 129, 136, where the prince's seal, "called *real*," the mayoralty seal of Bayonne and the great seal of Bayonne are mentioned.

<sup>3</sup> Titular descriptions in legends and instruments which refer to Wales, Cornwall, etc. (for example, *Foedera*, iii. p. 821, where a "notary of the chancery of the prince of Aquitaine and Wales" is mentioned), in no wise indicate the universal authority of the seal. In such descriptions the diplomatic of the great seal of Aquitaine did not entirely resemble that of the prince's other local seals in Chester or Wales. Thus the legend of the seal recites the prince of Aquitaine's titles at length (see part ii. below, p. 428), whereas the Chester seal recorded only his Chester title (Richard II.'s seal as prince of Chester, however, referred to his position as king of England, though his seal as earl did not). On the other hand, the prince's titles were recited at length in the opening phrase of instruments under the seals both of Aquitaine and of Chester.

<sup>4</sup> Letters under the great seal were made, for example, at Saintes in May 1371 (*Chanc. Misc.* 25/5, no. 15).

<sup>5</sup> Streatley was constable during the Black Prince's Gascon visit of 1355-57 and earlier (see vol. vi. appendix i.); he was acting till July 1361 (*Gasc.* 74, m. 8). In July 1360 he is called councillor of the prince of Wales (*C. Pap. Reg. Pet.* i. p. 357). In June 1361 he was a king's councillor in the parts of France (*Gasc.* 74, m. 6). He is found acting as chancellor on Nov. 9, 1362 (see n. 1, p. 377). On Nov. 28 he appointed attorneys and received a protection (*Gasc.* 75, m. 2). In Nov. he was excused attendance at the exchequer through his preoccupation with the prince's "difficult matters" (*C.P.R.*, 1361-64, p. 272). Early in Nov. 1362 *La Michel* of London, laden with his goods, was wrecked off the Dorset coast, and his possessions stolen (*ib.* pp. 290 and 368). Harewell was acting as constable in Nov. 1362 (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 252), was still acting in July 1363 (*Arch. hist. Gir.* xxxiv. p. 185), and was chancellor by Dec. 1363 (*C. Pap. Reg. Let.* iv. p. 6). The names of both Streatley and Harewell indicate a local connection with the prince's honours, though Streatley does not seem to have been actually within the honour of Wallingford despite its proximity to Wallingford (*C.P.R.*, 1384-88, p. 532). For Harwell (probably the correct form of the name) and the honour of St. Valery see *Cal. Inq.* ix. pp. 237, 239. John Streatley held a canonry and prebend of Lincoln on the request of the chancellor and masters of the University of Oxford, 1343 (*C. Pap. Reg. Pet.* i. p. 60), and was subsequently dean of Lincoln, 1361 (*ib.* p. 317), on the petition of the prince (*ib.* p. 356). He also held a canonry and prebend of Salisbury,

appointments the prince abandoned the disastrous principle of rewarding his English friends, and relied upon the local ecclesiastic.<sup>1</sup> After his return to England the seal remained behind in Aquitaine, and oddly enough the king made the next appointment.

Nothing is known of the secretarial department which centred round the privy seal used by the prince in Gascony from 1363 onwards. As in the department of the great seal, procedure must have been influenced by local usage—for instance, notaries were probably active there—and diplomatic forms certainly reflected the custom of the country.<sup>2</sup> The seal normally seems to have accompanied the prince's person, though, on at least one occasion, during the Spanish expedition of 1366–67, he had not got his seal with him.<sup>3</sup> For Spanish consumption, notarial documents were naturally used,<sup>4</sup> as in most international agreements. There is no evidence as to who kept the privy seal, nor is it clear how far it was used for English business. It was certainly used on warrants

1355 (*ib.* p. 263), and of Chichester, 1364 (*ib.* p. 318), and a prebend of St. Paul's (*C.P.R.*, 1361–64, p. 177). He had claims also to the archdeaconry of Leicester (*C. Pap. Reg. Pet.* i. p. 361) and to a prebend of Southwell (Le Neve, *Fasti*, i. p. 426). He was an M.A. and D.C.L., and had considerable diplomatic experience. Apart from that acquired in Gascony, he twice took part in negotiations with the king of Castile, *e.g.* in June 1359 (*C.P.R.*, 1358–61, p. 230) and July 1361 (*Gasc.* 74, m. 6), and once with the count of Flanders (*C.P.R.*, 1361–64, p. 167). He is frequently called a king's clerk. He does not, I think, appear in the prince's service before he was constable of Bordeaux, and he disappears from administrative work after 1363. He was certainly dead by Nov. 1371 (*C. Pap. Reg. Pet. Let.* iv. p. 165). John Harewell was archdeacon of Norfolk before 1351 (Le Neve, *Fasti*, ii. p. 483), later archdeacon of Worcester (*ib.* iii. p. 72) and of Berkshire (*ib.* ii. p. 634). The prince tried to get him promoted to the see of Bath and Wells in 1363 without success (*C. Pap. Reg. Let.* iv. p. 6), though the pope's promise that he should not be forgotten was made good in 1366 by his provision to the same see (see Le Neve, *Fasti*, i. p. 138). The oath Harewell had to take, before the king would admit him to the temporalities, survives in the Record Office (*A.C.* iv. 72); its text is more informing than other references to the restitution of the temporalities, *e.g.* *Foedera*, III. ii. p. 852, *Gasc.* 81, m. 2.

<sup>1</sup> The chancellors of Aquitaine during the period of the principality were John Streatley, acting Nov. 9, 1362 (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 251d), still acting July 19, 1363 (*Arch. hist. Gir.* iv. p. 124); John Harewell, acting Dec. 1, 1363 (*C. Pap. Reg. Let.* iv. p. 6), still acting Mar. 6, 1369 (*A.C.* lv. 72d); the bishop of Poitiers, acting June 8, 1371 (*Gasc.* 84, m. 3), still acting Dec. 20, 1371 (*ib.* m. 1); according to Mas Latrie, Guy de Malsec was bishop between 1371 and 1375; and the abbot of St. Maxence, appointed by the king on April 16, 1372 (*Gasc.* 85, m. 5).

<sup>2</sup> For instance, in dating by the style of the Annunciation, see below, pp. 408–410.

<sup>3</sup> *Dipl. Docs. Exch.*, *T.R.* 230.

<sup>4</sup> For example, *ib.*

to the prince's officials in London, and occasionally to the local chamberlains,<sup>1</sup> but it is not clear whether it could be used directly for such purposes as making a grant. Yet the seal was not purely local in its application; it retained certainly some of the characteristics of a personal as opposed to a local seal. After the prince returned to England in 1371, he carried on principality business through this same privy seal,<sup>2</sup> and letters under it were dated according to Gascon usage.

The officials of the Black Prince's central secretariats were in the main humble and inconspicuous persons, noticeable rather for their fidelity to their lord than for any worldly position acquired as recognition of their long years of service. The Black Prince was, on the whole, a generous master, and his servants rarely lacked endowment from his personal resources. But it is remarkable how few of his servants ever attained to the ranks of the episcopacy, though Spridlington and Harewell<sup>3</sup> are conspicuous exceptions. Others, notably Fordham,<sup>4</sup> acquired a wider recognition during the reign of his son. There is little to tell about the personnel of his secretarial departments. His clerks seem rarely to have served the king in the chancery,<sup>5</sup> the office of the privy seal or the wardrobe;<sup>6</sup> occasionally, however, they had had experience in other subordinate royal households or passed on from the prince's service to such another master.<sup>7</sup> The keepers of the seal had usually already served the prince in some other

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 375.

<sup>2</sup> Gascon lands were granted Guichard D'Angle, marshal of Aquitaine, by letters patent at Kennington, April 1372, which end, "en tesmoignance de ce nous avons en absence de notre grand seel fait fere cestes nos lettres patentes enseelees de notre priuee seel dont nous usoms en notre dite principaute d'aquitaine." They were dated by the year of grace (*Gasc.* 85, m. 11).

<sup>3</sup> See above, pp. 337, n. 7, 376, n. 5.

<sup>4</sup> See below, p. 380.

<sup>5</sup> John Branketre, on whose behalf Peter Gildesburgh petitioned the pope in 1349, is an exception (*C. Pap. Reg. Pet.* i. p. 164; also Wilkinson, *Chancery*, p. 169). But Branketre's services to the prince are very rarely mentioned in the records of his administrative system.

<sup>6</sup> Perhaps William Munden, the prince's first keeper of the seal (see appendix to this section), can be identified with William Cusance's controller, William of Minden, clerk and secretary of John of Eltham as earl of Cornwall. (See above, iv. p. 78, n. 7.) A William de Munden was a servant of queen Philippa and a prebendary of the chapel in her castle of Pontefract in 1335 (*Chanc. Misc.* 9/58).

<sup>7</sup> Simon Islip is described in 1343 as a clerk of Edward, the king's son (*C. Pap. Reg. Pet.* i. p. 56). Thence he passed to the service of Lionel of Antwerp and of the king (see above, p. 23).



capacity : Munden,<sup>1</sup> Glinton, Gildesburgh and Hale in the wardrobe, Henxteworth in the wardrobe and chamber, Wolveston as a clerk of privy seal. All were probably rewarded by livings in the prince's gift,<sup>2</sup> but, with the exception of Gildesburgh, they seldom enjoyed canonries and prebends. As the names of the keepers of the seal do not appear during the last years of the prince's life, it is impossible to know whether they were amongst those servants of the prince whom Richard II. promoted, and who thus acquired a vicarious political importance.

The Black Prince, like most magnates of the period, had his secretaries, but the term is perhaps merely used in the sense of a confidant. Peter Lacy, who was never directly associated with the custody of any of the prince's seals, nor with the chamber, is so called as early as 1349 ;<sup>3</sup> Aubrey Vere, uncle of Richard II.'s favourite, and later himself earl of Oxford, is thus described in 1371,<sup>4</sup> and so is John Fordham in 1370<sup>5</sup> and 1374.<sup>6</sup> Fordham's early career is tantalising in its evasiveness ;<sup>7</sup> he does not, I think, appear in the prince's service until after the foundation of the principality of Aquitaine. Though he was connected for some years with the prince's secretarial arrangements and was later keeper of Richard's privy seal, both as prince and king, I know of no direct evidence that he at any time kept any of the Black Prince's seals.<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, no other keepers are certainly known to us during the prince's later years. Fordham is said to have been employed for many years in the prince's service.<sup>9</sup> He made a collation of an important indenture between the Black Prince and the duke of Lancaster in October 1370,<sup>10</sup> and in the same month, in consideration of his past services, the prince gave

<sup>1</sup> Munden was a clerk in the prince's service as early as 1337-38 (*E.A.* 388/12).

<sup>2</sup> As will be abundantly evident when the prince's registers are published.

<sup>3</sup> *C. Pap. Reg. Pet.* i. p. 155.

<sup>4</sup> *C. Pap. Reg. Let.* iv. p. 96 (Oct. 1371). For Aubrey Vere see above, iii. p. 329, also *D.N.B.*

<sup>5</sup> *Gasc.* 86, m. 8.

<sup>6</sup> *C. Ch. R.* v. p. 241.

<sup>7</sup> His later career is fully dealt with in several places in these volumes.

<sup>8</sup> But see above, iv. p. 190. Fordham was apparently a clerk of privy seal in 1370 (see appendix, below). Between May 1375 and June 1376 he held some definite office, as appears in the contemporary description of a file of bills directed to the council; the precise office is, however, illegible (*A.P.* 333, no. 106).

<sup>9</sup> See above, iv. p. 189.

<sup>10</sup> *John of Gaunt's Register*, i. no. 9 ; also Delpit, p. 131. It is not certain which of the prince's seals was applied to this indenture.

him a house in the Ombrière at Bordeaux for life, when he is described as *notre bien ame serviteur et familier . . . notre secretaire*.<sup>1</sup> He wrote a letter of warrant under the privy seal in 1370.<sup>2</sup> In 1375 his name appears, amongst those of other conspicuous servants of the prince, as a witness to a formal letter patent.<sup>3</sup> It is possible that he may have been a keeper of the prince's secret seal, but his description as secretary, though suggestive, is not evidence.

The most important of the prince's clerks of the privy seal were those appointed to make his registers of letters. John Carleton, the first clerk definitely appointed as registrar,<sup>4</sup> remained for many years in the prince's and princess's service, but his name is so common that it is difficult to identify him. He was certainly rector of Allington, Lincoln; both the prince and princess separately petitioned the pope for a canonry of Lincoln on his behalf.<sup>5</sup> He was drafted by the prince to the service of his wife's chamber,<sup>6</sup> and he it was who drew up the elaborate grant of the principality of Aquitaine.<sup>7</sup> An additional grant daily over and above his wages of 4½d. a day was made to him in 1363;<sup>8</sup> he was at times commissioned as an auditor of local accounts.<sup>9</sup> He received a protection to go to Gascony with the prince in 1362,<sup>10</sup> but was in England collecting supplies of fish for the needs of the household in 1365.<sup>11</sup> He was also in England in 1366,<sup>12</sup> but was subsequently treasurer of the household, and later treasurer of Gascony.<sup>13</sup> His successor as registrar in 1364, John Bacon,<sup>14</sup> was less prominent in his services to the prince,

<sup>1</sup> *Gasc.* 86, m. 8. This "house of John Corneli" was subsequently surrendered by Fordham as bishop of Durham to John Stratton (*Arch. hist. Gir.* xvi. p. 172). The prince's original grant was confirmed by the king in 1373 (*Gasc.* 86, m. 8).

<sup>2</sup> *Chanc. Misc.* 34/1/2. This letter not only bears the prince's cipher in his own hand (see above, p. 371), but also Fordham's name written at the extreme right at the bottom of the document.

<sup>3</sup> *Charter Roll*, 155, m. 16 (*C. Ch. R.* v. p. 241), an *inspeximus* by Richard II. of a letter issued by his father on Feb. 2, 1375. The prince's letter was dated according to the style of the Annunciation.

<sup>4</sup> In 1352, see appendix to this section.

<sup>5</sup> *C. Pap. Reg. Pet.* i. pp. 455, 456.

<sup>6</sup> *M.B.E.*, T.R. 278, f. 250 (1362).

<sup>8</sup> *Ib.* f. 262d.

<sup>9</sup> *Ib.* f. 232 (Mar. 1362).

<sup>7</sup> *Ib.* f. 254d.

<sup>10</sup> *Gasc.* 75, m. 4.

<sup>11</sup> *Ib.* 78, m. 3. He had another protection in Feb. 1364; *ib.* 77.

<sup>12</sup> *Ib.* 79, m. 15.

<sup>13</sup> See above, p. 367.

<sup>14</sup> Acting April 15. *M.B.E.*, T.R. 278, f. 272d.

but destined to a more successful career. He was one of the envoys from England to the prince in Gascony about 1364,<sup>1</sup> and having outlived his master, became secretary to Richard II. and a chamberlain of the exchequer.<sup>2</sup> Apart from John Barnet,<sup>3</sup> few of the prince's other clerks became at all well known, though the papal interest was occasionally invoked on their behalf.<sup>4</sup>

After the privy seal had left the prince's person, the need arose for another seal which should stay with him. The secret seal appears in 1342,<sup>5</sup> and was very probably in use before; the signet appears in 1359,<sup>6</sup> if not earlier. On the royal analogy, it is probable that the same seal is thus described by different names; moreover, as in the king's case, the signet appears more frequently than the secret seal during the latter part of the reign. It seems probable that the secret seal was the seal of the prince's chamber,<sup>7</sup> though the evidence is too incomplete for certainty. A pardon and acquittance concerning the receiver of the chamber in 1362 was sealed by both privy and secret seal;<sup>8</sup> a list of payments in the chamber was sent to the receiver-general under the signet<sup>9</sup>—such scraps of information are suggestive if not conclusive. In this case the seal may have been kept by the receiver of the chamber, though, as we have seen, John Fordham, the prince's secretary, may possibly have held its custody later in the prince's lifetime. The secret seal was the normal instrument to warrant the issue of letters of presentation to churches under the privy seal;<sup>10</sup> it also warranted payments.<sup>11</sup> Both the privy and the secret seal appeared on the prince's will<sup>12</sup> in accordance with the custom of the period.

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 384.

<sup>2</sup> See above, iv. p. 335.

<sup>3</sup> See above, iii. p. 232, *C. Pap. Reg. Pet.* i. p. 458; *C.P.R.*, 1361-64, p. 368. Barnet apparently served only in the chancery of Aquitaine.

<sup>4</sup> For example, Richard Wath, clerk of the privy seal in 1346 and 1347 (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144, f. 38 and f. 71), was granted a canonry of Southwell in 1349 (*C. Pap. Reg. Pet.* i. p. 153).

<sup>5</sup> *M.A.* 1241/13 (an account of the escheator of Chester).

<sup>6</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 157.

<sup>7</sup> The phrase "given under our signet in our wardrobe at London" (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 279, f. 200d) presumably refers to the prince's presence at the wardrobe, and not to any intimate connection between signet and wardrobe.

<sup>8</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 249d. This was a pardon to John Henxteworth, late receiver of the chamber, of all actions taken against him concerning the receipt of moneys assigned to the chamber.

<sup>9</sup> *Ib.* f. 237d.

<sup>10</sup> *A.C.* liv. 59, 71, 78, 89, etc. Compare, for example, *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 299d.

<sup>11</sup> *A.C.* liv. 96.

<sup>12</sup> Nichols, *Royal Wills*, p. 76.



The Black Prince's secretarial organisation was essentially similar to that of the king. The place of the great seal in national government was taken in the prince's administrative system by his privy seal, and in Wales, Chester and Gascony by local seals. Thus the operations of the prince's privy seal were in some ways modelled on the practice of the chancery, in others on that of the king's privy seal department. Despite the apparent difference, the prince's system was in essentials conservative. Moreover, the organisation of his smaller seal, the secret seal or signet, in so far as it can be discerned, appears still more completely imitative. These resemblances are not only evident in organisation, but also in methods of sealing and folding, and in diplomatic forms, though here an original note sometimes appears.<sup>1</sup> In essentials the prince's system also resembles that used in the central organisation of the dukes of Lancaster. The exclusion of the royal authority from certain areas never resulted, even within these areas, in any remarkable or fundamental deviations from royal practice; and this generalisation has perhaps greater applicability to secretarial organisation than in any other field.

The prince's council was the centre of his administrative system; its pervasive influence has been noticed in both financial and secretarial organisation. It bore a striking resemblance to the king's council; its functions, its ever-changing composition, its relations to other units of government, were as undefined and indefinable in the one case as the other, and it had also the same essential unity. Though the prince's council was perhaps potentially smaller than the king's, it was sufficiently influential to merit at times the appellation "great"; conversely, it is sometimes described as "privy" at times when its meetings were secret.<sup>2</sup> It certainly held four great sessions a year, at which suitors from the prince's lordships were wont to be present; these were the meetings of the great council. Its functions were both advisory and executive; ordinances, issued by its authority,

<sup>1</sup> See part ii. below.

<sup>2</sup> For example, *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 279, f. 182. For the significance of such terms see Baldwin, *King's Council*, chapter v.

had the force of law throughout the prince's domains, and no administrative innovation could be introduced without its authority. Every important general instruction to the ministers of the lordships issued under the prince's seal would include some such formula as "with the advice of our council," or "with the consent of our council."<sup>1</sup> Conversely, petitions from men of the lordships might be addressed in flattering phrase to the council, no less often than to the prince himself.<sup>2</sup> The council provided the directing brain which controlled and co-ordinated the diverse lands and institutions of the prince's appanage, and welded the scattered parts into one efficient whole.

The unity and fluidity of the council are its most salient characteristics. A group of councillors sent on a special mission, or with general powers, to Cheshire, Wales or Cornwall, might act on the prince's behalf in almost any issue; in them was concentrated the supreme authority of the prince's administration, no less than in the centralised sessions in London. The visits of auditors and justices were occasions to be greeted with preparations worthy of royalty itself; such visitors formed, in effect, specialised committees of the council, of indeterminate powers and membership, but wide authority. Localised councils were not, I think, established in the lordships,<sup>3</sup> but in Gascony the existing council continued to function with increased authority and splendour during the prince's presence in Aquitaine. Over Gascony the prince's councillors in London had, of course, no power; in England their decrees, expressed either from London or within the lordships, by many councillors or by few, were finally decisive. Yet the prince's wishes and interests were, of course, the touchstone of their action.

During the lord Edward's childhood this council was naturally the real governing body for his estates. But its pre-eminence was largely retained during his later life, for he was constantly absent

<sup>1</sup> These points are well illustrated, for example, in the long series of conciliar resolutions and other instructions sent to the prince's commissioners in Cheshire in 1351 (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 279, f. 2, etc.), and in the replies to them from the commissioners with further observations thereon by the council (*ib.* f. 7).

<sup>2</sup> For example, *A.P.* 333 *passim*. Also *A.C.* liv. 82.

<sup>3</sup> I can find only the slightest evidence of the existence of a council in the palatinate of Chester, though its presence has been assumed (*e.g.* A. E. Levett, "Baronial Councils," pp. 424 and 425 in *Mélanges d'histoire du moyen âge offerts à M. Ferdinand Lot*).

or preoccupied with affairs of state, and at such times the council was virtually independent. Yet contact was maintained, even during his absence, between the prince and his council by the interchange of messengers and correspondence. John Delves and John Bacon, for example, visited the prince in Gascony about 1364, and there survives a list of the points upon which they were to get the instructions and opinion of the prince, together with notes of the results of the conversations.<sup>1</sup>

The years around 1350 were a time of administrative activity and experiment both in the prince's central and local government, and about this time the position of the council would seem to have been defined in various ways. Before 1351 the prince's council had been hearing, in his exchequer, Cheshire pleas which had in the past been settled locally, and this unpopular procedure was then amended, but "if the business was so high or doubtful that it could not be determined without the prince and his great council," it was to be dealt with by the said council wherever they were at four annual terms.<sup>2</sup> In this capacity the councillors take on the character of the king's "barons of the exchequer." At the same time business concerning the escheatrics was reserved for the cognisance of the council.<sup>3</sup> In 1353 it was decreed that complaints against the prince's ministers were to be made to the prince and council, "so that they may have right done and guilty ministers may be suitably punished."<sup>4</sup> In such ways the position of the council was crystallising, though still too little detail emerges from the general obscurity to define its powers.<sup>5</sup> But the council was certainly the depository of information and complaint, the source of law and administrative activity, and the highest judicial court: it was supreme in every sphere, it had no limits to its scope and no fixed meeting place.

Occasional glimpses of the letters and petitions addressed to

<sup>1</sup> *Dipl. Docs. Exch.*, 1647. This is in very bad condition and is largely illegible. It is dated by the Public Record Office as 1363-64. Delves was given a protection and appointed attorneys in April 1364 (*Gasc.* 77, m. 3). In Nov. 1365 he was granted an annuity by the king for bringing back the good news of the birth of Edward, the Black Prince's son (*C.P.R.*, 1364-67, p. 180). It seems probable, therefore, that this son was born in July 1365 (see *D.N.B.* for uncertainty as to date of his birth).

<sup>2</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 279, f. 13d.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* f. 55.

<sup>5</sup> When the Black Prince's registers are accessible in print, it may be possible to form a more precise estimate of the importance of the council.



the council testify to the volume of business with which it had to deal,<sup>1</sup> and the prince's registers on every page reveal its activity in government. So numerous were the petitions that they were systematically filed term by term according to their place of origin.<sup>2</sup> Many of them ask that letters may be made in the petitioner's favour under the prince's seal, and such petitions, endorsed, were a warrant to the keeper of the seal to issue the letters. The association between the privy seal and the council was indeed intimate, and the advice or information of one or more councillors was often all the warrant required for a letter to be issued. But the seal must not in any way be regarded as the instrument of the council.

Membership of the prince's council was as indeterminate as were its functions ; it was not a closed and formal body, though certain elements in it were constant. The prince's ministers both past and present were represented there : men like Peter Gildesburgh and Bartholomew Burghersh continued as councillors to be loosely attached to his interests after their active administrative work had ended. The king's servants who had been temporarily or permanently drafted to the prince's service were also members of the council, men like William Shareshull<sup>3</sup> and Henry Green,<sup>4</sup> king's justices. Indeed the legal element is frequently stressed, largely on account of the annual fee which was the lawyer's portion. Such specialised councillors, retained at a definite fee,<sup>5</sup> were probably not the majority, nor even the more important part of the council. The official members, the administrators and ex-administrators, were the most permanent and active element ; in addition there was always a number of magnates, more or less perhaps, according to the dignity of the occasion.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *A.C.* liv. contains some sixty letters addressed to the prince and his council. These are usually undated, but a number certainly belong to the period round about 1346. *A.P.* 333 contains about a hundred petitions of 1375 and 1376.

<sup>2</sup> *E.g.* *A.P.* 333, no. 106.

<sup>3</sup> For an account of Shareshull see D. L. Evans, *Flintshire Ministers' Accounts*, ix.

<sup>4</sup> Green was granted an annual present by the prince while remaining a member of his council, in virtue of the "great labour and diligence he must needs bestow on the prince's business when matters of law are on hand" (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 93).

<sup>5</sup> For instance, Thomas Ludlow was retained to be of the prince's council for matters touching the law at a fee of 50s. a year (*ib.* 267).

<sup>6</sup> The only list of the prince's councillors of which I know is contained in a Tudor inquiry into the government of earlier princes of Wales, especially in the

Occasionally a member of the prince's household is dignified by the description of "prince's councillor," for instance, John Harewell in 1375,<sup>1</sup> James Audley in 1363 and 1366,<sup>2</sup> and Thomas Felton during the Spanish expedition.<sup>3</sup> Others, notably John Chandos, never seem to have held any very definite position in the household or council,<sup>4</sup> and yet for many years they were closely associated with the prince's activities.<sup>5</sup>

From early times there may have been a chief of the council (*chief du conseil*), though he is seldom mentioned. Such a position was always obscure. It exists in the king's council at this date, though the holder of such a title did not necessarily act as chairman or president, for the chancellor, treasurer or keeper of the privy seal normally performed that duty.<sup>6</sup> John Wingfield, one of the most active of the Black Prince's councillors, is, at least on one occasion, described as chief of the prince's council under the earl of Suffolk.<sup>7</sup> It is tempting, but quite unwarrantable, to bridge the next hundred years of history, and to see in this office the ancestor of that of the president of the council of the prince of Wales, in which under Edward IV. the germ of the later royal office has been descried.<sup>8</sup> For such an hypothesis there is certainly

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Marches. It is here clear that the king strengthened the council by additional councillors when the prince was himself going abroad. Fifteen of the Black Prince's own councillors are enumerated: John Wingfield, John Delves, John Dabernon, Alexander Bangre (probably Ongar), Skipwith, Mowbray, I. Debenham, William Spridlington, his auditor, William (*sic*) Lacy, his receiver, Wichingham, Bourney, Stafford, Bannister, William Shareshull, William Hall (*Letters and Papers*, I. vol. 144, pp. 109-111 in P.R.O.). Of these I cannot identify Wichingham, Bourney and William Hall.

<sup>1</sup> *C. Ch. R.* v. p. 241.

<sup>2</sup> *C. Pap. Reg. Pet.* i. pp. 467 and 514.

<sup>3</sup> Felton is described, with Chandos, as "li plus especial de son conseil" (Froissart, *Chroniques*, ed. Luce, vi. p. 216).

<sup>4</sup> But see n. 3 above.

<sup>5</sup> Chandos was in the prince's service as early as 1340 (*E.A.* 389/6), and was still his assistant and critic at the time of his death in 1370. But he was also a trusted servant of the king's, as vice-chamberlain (1359, see above, iv. p. 139), as the king's lieutenant and captain-general in the parts of France after 1360, and as steward of Gascony (*Gasc.* 74, m. 3). Under the principality he became "constable of Aquitaine," apparently a military office. Both Audley and Chandos are, of course, chiefly notable for their military exploits; unlike most of the prince's servants, each is dealt with in the *D.N.B.*

<sup>6</sup> Baldwin, *King's Council*, pp. 369-371. It has been stated, however, that in the council of John of Gaunt "the chief of the council" acted as president (Armitage-Smith, *John of Gaunt*, p. 223).

<sup>7</sup> *M.B.E., T.R.* 278, f. 20 (1353).

<sup>8</sup> Baldwin, *op. cit.* p. 371. Yet there is perhaps a certain similarity in Wingfield's position of inferiority to Suffolk and the status of later presidents of the king's council.

no evidence; the Black Prince's council, a growth and no deliberate creation, is more likely to have conformed to the royal pattern of its own age.

There is little other indication of the earl of Suffolk's connection with the Black Prince's council.<sup>1</sup> The prominence of the position of John Wingfield, on the other hand, is attested in many ways. By 1351 he was steward of the prince's lands;<sup>2</sup> in 1358 he was "governor of the prince's business"<sup>3</sup> and also an auditor;<sup>4</sup> in 1358 and 1359 he was the prince's attorney.<sup>5</sup> He is constantly referred to in the prince's registers between 1351<sup>6</sup> and 1361 when he died;<sup>7</sup> letters were addressed to him by local officials;<sup>8</sup> his name appears more frequently than that of any other councillor among the warrants of issue of the prince's letters, and his advice alone was in itself often a sufficient warrant;<sup>9</sup> his name was placed first when he acted in association with

<sup>1</sup> Robert Ufford, earl of Suffolk, was associated with the Black Prince's household as early as 1337, but was later employed in many capacities by the king and was often abroad. In 1347-48, however, he was in Cheshire on a conciliar visit (Brown, p. 125). He was also in France with the prince in 1355 and 1356.

<sup>2</sup> Brown, p. 162.

<sup>3</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 150d.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* f. 149.

<sup>5</sup> *C.C.R.*, 1354-60, pp. 489, 657.

<sup>6</sup> Wingfield served William Montague, second earl of Salisbury of his house, during his minority, and in 1352 was rewarded by the earl for his services by a grant of Cheshire land (*Cheshire Plea Roll* 63, m. 10). He embarked for France in Salisbury's retinue before the Crécy campaign (Wrottesley, p. 132); at Crécy he was amongst the king's own followers (*ib.* p. 38), and later in the retinue of Bartholomew Burghersh the elder (*ib.* p. 153), through whose influence he perhaps entered the prince's service. His activities abroad were recognised by a grant of exemption from being placed on assizes (*ib.* 269). In 1358 he is described as chief of the council of the countess of Warenne, in the note of warrant authorising the issue, under the prince's seal, of letters of appointment of a bailiff of the manor of Trowbridge (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 145d). The widowed Joan of Bar (v. *D.N.B.*, John Warenne) granted Trowbridge to the prince of Wales for her life in 1348 (*C.P.R.*, 1348-50, p. 93), and it is curious that her connection with the manor was retained in any way. An earlier similar appointment was made by her advice and assent on the information of Wingfield (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 142d).

<sup>7</sup> Wingfield was still warranting the issue of letters in June 1361 (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 214). As much as £57 : 13 : 4 was spent from the prince's revenues on his burial, and allowance for this sum was made to the receiver-general on Nov. 4 (*ib.* f. 221).

<sup>8</sup> For example, a letter, in reply to a conciliar request for information on various Cheshire matters, was addressed by the justice and chamberlain of Chester in 1351 to John Wingfield and John Hale, then keeper of the privy seal (*ib.* 279, f. 17).

<sup>9</sup> For example, *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 279, f. 153; also *ib.* 278, f. 120d. "This letter was commanded by John Wingfield in the chamber of the keeper of the privy



others.<sup>1</sup> It is not possible to attribute his pre-eminence to any one of his official positions, for his actual office was rarely mentioned; his name was of itself authoritative.<sup>2</sup>

No appointment of a governor of the prince's business survives; but it was clearly an important position and may have been granted by word of mouth.<sup>3</sup> Wingfield was paid ten shillings a day, the largest daily wage received by any minister of the prince.<sup>4</sup> Though the duties of the governor are obscure, it is clear that he was virtually the prince's lieutenant and that his office was no sinecure. The governor would seem to hold an equally conspicuous, if equally indefinable, position to that held by the masters in the prince's early household: and indeed one master was subsequently described as governor of the prince's affairs.<sup>5</sup> With increasing business no supervisory post could

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seal in the inn of the bishop of Ely." Compare a letter given "by command of Wingfield, who examined the said parcels . . . and sent them under his seal to Wolveston to make warrant" (*ib.* f. 130d). For the issue of some letters his advice or warrant may have been considered indispensable: in 1355 a memorandum was made and sealed by the advice of Peter Lacy because John Wingfield was out of town (*feust hors de ville*). This was done at the suit of Edmund, clerk of the said John (*ib.* f. 81d); the letter in question, however, affected moneys due to Wingfield.

<sup>1</sup> Wingfield's activity in authorising the prince's letters is noticeable from 1351, when the later registers start, until the summer of 1361. Yet he was not in England continuously; he ceased to warrant letters on the prince's departure for Gascony in Sept. 1355, when he accompanied his master. He sent letters to England describing the prince's raid to Narbonne, and subsequent operations, in Oct. 1355 and Jan. 1356 (Avesbury, pp. 439 and 445).

<sup>2</sup> In 1355 a claim was to be held up till a certain date unless in the meantime the prince or John Wingfield returned to England (both were then in Gascony) (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 99). In 1353 a dispute which concerned the abbot of Chester could not be settled until his arrival, as his presence was necessary (*ib.* 279, f. 68). A report was made verbally to Wingfield in 1355 and he forgot its purport, and the matter had to be certified again by letter to the council (*ib.* 104). Such references indicate the importance of his position. Requests for chancery protections for men in the prince's following seem to have been issued by his authority, and were probably sealed with his signet, *e.g.* *C.W.* I. 1747/16 (wrongly assigned by the Public Record Office to the reign of Edward I., compare nos. 25 and 28).

<sup>3</sup> It is curious that in two cases orders to the receiver to pay the governor's wages from a certain date are noted, whereas the appointments do not survive in the register where appointments should naturally have been recorded.

<sup>4</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 150d (Sept. 29, 1358). The receiver-general is here ordered to pay Wingfield "governour de noz busoignes," ten shillings a day in future "pur le temps qil sera devers nous." In Oct. 1359 he was badly in debt because of his long stay in London on the prince's business, and his great expenses, and the prince granted him £400 towards the settlement of his debt (*ib.* 179d).

<sup>5</sup> Above, p. 320, n. 5.

any longer be limited to the household, and it is possible that the governors were the heirs of the masters. The latter owed their authority to their master's youth and inexperience, the former to his frequent absences.<sup>1</sup>

The office of governor was continued after Wingfield's death, and in 1363 was held by John Delves,<sup>2</sup> a man who had long been foremost in the prince's service, more especially as an acting justice of North Wales<sup>3</sup> and Chester,<sup>4</sup> which offices he apparently continued to hold, even after he was governor.<sup>5</sup> He was also a prominent councillor.<sup>6</sup> His family had strong territorial interests in Staffordshire, and the prince's favour helped him to establish a considerable position as landholder in Cheshire.<sup>7</sup> Both before and after the prince's departure for Aquitaine, Delves frequently authorised the issue of letters in England. As representative of the prince's interests in England, and as a liaison officer with his government in Aquitaine, Delves bore heavy responsibilities. Yet he never attained the personal pre-eminence which distinguished Wingfield. His pay as governor was only 6s. 3d. a day,<sup>8</sup> but was augmented by the fees of his local offices. Delves was still in the prince's service in 1367,<sup>9</sup> and died before September 1369.<sup>10</sup>

The position of governor of the prince's business has not only some resemblance to that of the master of the household,

<sup>1</sup> Such an officer was not unusual in the case of an absent magnate. Thus John Chandos, in 1366, had a councillor and secretary and governor of all his property in England (*C. Pap. Reg. Pet.* i. p. 525).

<sup>2</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 261d.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. vi. appendix i. Delves is described as the prince's yeoman and as lieutenant of the justice of N. Wales in Mar. 1351 (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 280, f. 2).

<sup>4</sup> He was lieutenant of the justice of Chester, Oct. 1353 (*ib.* 279, f. 66 and 68), was appointed jointly with John Pole as lieutenant in 1362 (*Cheshire Plea Roll*, 68, m. 9), and was himself a co-justice in 1364 (*ib.* 72, m. 23).

<sup>5</sup> Thus his wages as governor were only to be paid him for such times as he was occupied on the prince's business outside the lordships of North Wales, Denbigh and Chester (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 261d).

<sup>6</sup> For instance, letters were issued by his authority in association with other members of the council as early as 1354 (*e.g. ib.* 280, f. 59).

<sup>7</sup> An account of John Delves, which, however, ignores his administrative service to the Black Prince, is given in Ormerod, *History of Cheshire*, iii. p. 518. His grants from the Black Prince appear frequently in the Cheshire recognisance rolls.

<sup>8</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 261d.

<sup>9</sup> *M.R.*, *K.R.* 152, brev. ret. Mich.

<sup>10</sup> When some of his lands in England were taken into the king's hands (*C.F.R.* viii. p. 57).

but there are also indications of its association with the office of steward of lands, though the governor had certainly higher status, higher wages and more extended responsibilities. Both officials were usually knights; both exercised general powers of supervision over the whole of the prince's domains. Moreover, the same men served in both offices, if not concurrently, at least at no great distance of time from each other.<sup>1</sup> We have noticed the existence and prominence of the steward in the household of the prince's minority, but both then and later his precise functions evade inquiry. One commitment of the office survives, when it was given in 1347 to Richard Stafford, a man whose long and useful career was largely devoted to the prince's service.<sup>2</sup> He was then granted *l'office de seneschalees et la surveue de totes noz terres* as well in Wales and Chester as in Cornwall and elsewhere in England; he received a hundred marks a year as his fee.<sup>3</sup> In 1349, Peter Gildesburgh, who had retired from active financial work and was at Avignon as the envoy of the prince of Wales,<sup>4</sup> is described both as governor of his lands<sup>5</sup> and also as their keeper.<sup>6</sup> On the strength of one scrap of evidence, it is

<sup>1</sup> Wingfield is called steward in 1353, governor of the prince's business in 1358. Delves was steward at some unspecified date during the prince's absence in Aquitaine (*C.P.R.*, 1377-81, p. 249), and governor in 1363.

<sup>2</sup> There is a good deal of information about Richard Stafford in the *D.N.B.* in the article on his elder brother Ralph, earl of Stafford; see also above, iii. p. 328. His position was assured by 1343, when he was a member of the prince's council, and chief of the commissioners to whom the principality was first handed over (see D. L. Evans, *Cymm. Soc. Pub.*, loc. cit. p. 39). He was probably not yet steward of lands. He acquired considerable property in Cheshire, and served as an itinerant justice, frequently as the colleague of John Delves, both in Wales and Chester, in connection with the hearing of pleas of *quo warranto*, as *The Record of Carnarvon* and the *Cheshire Plea Rolls* testify. He took part in both the Crécy and Poitiers campaigns; he constantly authorised the issue of the prince's letters. In 1358 his signal services were rewarded by a grant of Cheshire lands and rent of the value of 200 marks annually (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 279, f. 177d). In the same year he was granted 10s. a day as his wages when going from his house on the prince's business (*ib.* 278, f. 150), but it is not certain what his official position then was. He was also an auditor of wardrobe accounts in 1358 (*ib.* f. 149). He was steward of Gascony between July (*Gasc.* 74, m. 8) and Nov. 1361 (*ib.* m. 3), and was subsequently abroad with the prince of Aquitaine. As late as 1370 he was still an influential councillor (*Chanc. Misc.* 34/1/2; see above, p. 375). He was no longer alive in Aug. 1380, when his rights in Northwich, Cheshire, were granted John Holland (*D.K. Reports*, xxxvi. p. 241).

<sup>3</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144, f. 39d.  
<sup>4</sup> *C. Pap. Reg. Pet.* i. pp. 154 and 156 (May); *ib.* 164 (June). He is also described as the prince's envoy in Jan. 1351 (*ib.* p. 207).

<sup>5</sup> *C. Pap. Reg. Pet.* i. p. 156; also p. 293.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.* p. 178 (Oct.).



perhaps fantastic to see in his person a combination of the office of steward with the beginnings of the later position of "governor of the prince's business"; moreover, Gildesburgh was a clerk, not a layman. Yet Gildesburgh's position of influence was not unlike that later held by Wingfield; he is described as the "prince's councillor,"<sup>1</sup> and, on the strength of past service alone, merited a unique position.

Wingfield was steward by 1351, but is not called governor till 1358, and then but rarely. Yet it is perhaps significant that during the years of Wingfield's predominance the office of steward is rarely mentioned, and no other man appears to have held it.<sup>2</sup> Still more suggestive is its instant reappearance after Wingfield's death. He died some time between June and November 1361.<sup>3</sup> In October commissions were issued by the prince for the surveillance of the prince's lordships in various counties,<sup>4</sup> and about the same time stewards of his lands in groups of counties were appointed who apparently replaced the single steward.<sup>5</sup> Thus it would certainly seem that Wingfield may have been acting as steward till his death, and that the position of governor included the supervision of lands as well as of other business. That John Delves, the next governor known to us, was also once called steward is another confirmation of this hypothesis. I have found no evidence of how long the lesser stewardships were continued. Delves must have been chief steward, if not single steward, and Hugh Segrave, who was in office at the end of the prince's life and was an executor who administered his estates after his death, probably also acted alone.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *C. Pap. Reg. Pet.* i. pp. 207, 294, etc.

<sup>2</sup> See appendix.

<sup>3</sup> Above, p. 387, n. 7.

<sup>4</sup> *M.B.E., T.R.* 278, f. 219d (Oct. 24). John Carleton and Richard Stokes were to be surveyors "of all our lands and lordships" in the counties of Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire, Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, Rutland and Huntingdon; William Spridlington and John Steve in Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Kent and Sussex.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* The groups were (1) Huntingdon, Northampton, Rutland and Kesteven, Lincs; (2) Leicester, Notts, Derby; (3) Hertford; (4) Kent and Sussex; (5) Suffolk and Essex. These groups are much smaller than the four over which the keepers of fees had power, and did not, of course, include nearly all the prince's lands. For further details see *ib.* 232d.

<sup>6</sup> See appendix. Segrave's career is outlined above, iii. p. 328, iv. 149, 157. His experience as an administrator was first gained in the service of queen Philippa; I have found no reference to him in the prince's service before he

The parallel movement towards both devolution and centralisation was, of course, characteristic of the period. The policy of administration through arbitrary geographical areas had been earlier fixed by the prince in the office of keeper of his fees, apparently with such success that the principle was applied more widely. The geographical distribution of the prince's lands probably explains why the Trent is never used by the prince as an administrative boundary. Local administration as such cannot be discussed here, but in the office of keeper of the fees, as well as that of steward, we see attempts to centralise and to link up central and local government; in both the same experiment of devolution was tried temporarily, if not permanently. The office of keeper of fees, like that of escheator in national administration, cannot be relegated entirely to the domain of local government.

Besides the solid blocks of land like Cornwall and Chester which were held by the Black Prince, he had many scattered fees and feudal superiorities over the whole of England. Such were those commonly described in the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries as pertaining to the honour of Chester.<sup>1</sup> The honours of Wallingford, St. Valery and Berkhamsted, which had been associated with the earldom of Cornwall, were more concentrated and had, therefore, retained greater unity. But there was a tendency towards disintegration in all the honours, which was partly neutralised by official inquiries as to their extent,<sup>2</sup> and

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became steward. In 1372 he was in Cheshire with other "lords of the council" in order to supervise "the state and government" of the lordships, castles, etc. in Cheshire and Flint (*M.A.* 772/8). See below, pp. 397-398, for his work as the prince's executor.

<sup>1</sup> The complicated history of the lands and fees outside Cheshire, which before 1232 had been held by the Norman earls of Chester, cannot be entered into here. After the dismemberment of the inheritance of earl Ranulf III. they are often described as "the honour of Chester," though they had no unity and their association with Cheshire tended to be forgotten. When the earldom of Chester was granted to the Black Prince, however, the knights' fees, "as well foreign in England as others," were specifically included in his grant (*C.Ch.R.* iv. p. 300). The component parts of the honour of Chester are detailed at length in W. Farrer, *Honors and Knights' Fees*, vol. ii.

<sup>2</sup> After the grant of the "foreign fees" of Chester to the Black Prince, inquiries were set on foot to ascertain what fees should rightly be included. In June 1334, a writ was issued to the treasurer and barons of the exchequer desiring them to search exchequer records with this end in view (*M.R.*, *K.R.* 118, m. 83). Dr. Broome kindly drew my attention to this entry. The result of this

by the appointment of keepers of the fees. The first such keeper was concerned with the fees of Chester in England,<sup>1</sup> but his successor<sup>2</sup> had a wider charge, including the fees "as well in the county of Chester, Wales and the March of Wales, as in England, and of all the fees of the honours of Wallingford, St. Valery and Berkhamsted." In Cheshire his work must have overlapped that of the local escheator, who existed concurrently.<sup>3</sup> Subsequent keepers were appointed both to the custody of the fees of Chester outside that county and to those of the other honours.<sup>4</sup> With such centralisation the identity of the various honours was doubtless to some extent lost, but the prince's fees were no longer likely to be alienated. The work evidently proved too onerous for one man,<sup>5</sup> and after 1358 separate keepers were appointed to act in groups of neighbouring counties.<sup>6</sup> The traditional unity of the honours was thus ignored to further the

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or a succeeding inquiry fortunately survives (*C.P.R.*, 1333-1340, pp. 32-43 (1338)). These schedules were obviously compiled from varying sources of information of varying date; part come from the *Book of Fees*, part from the *Red Book of the Exchequer*, while portions are the basis of returns which appear in *Feudal Aids*, to give these works the names by which they are now known. It is clear that the association of many of these fees with the earldom (*comitatus*) of Chester had long been forgotten. The king appointed a commissioner in 1351 to inquire whether many of the knights' fees pertaining to the castles and manors of the prince of Wales had been usurped (*C.P.R.*, 1350-54, p. 81); here the appurtenances of all the prince's honours were included.

<sup>1</sup> John Poynton, appointed May 10, 1333 (*Pat.* 181, m. 13; *C.P.R.*, 1330-34, p. 419). The calendar entry omits some interesting details.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Pydington, appointed Sept. 10, 1341 (*C.P.R.*, 1340-43, p. 276).

<sup>3</sup> Both Poynton and Pydington are, however, once at least, described as "late escheators" of Cheshire (*E.A.* 389/6, m. 2), and Pydington certainly once acted there (*Misc. Ex.* 4/17, m. 14). Yet separate Cheshire escheators certainly continued to act as usual throughout these years. Cheshire escheats must have continued to swell Cheshire revenues; the moneys arising from the fees in the custody of the keeper were directly accounted for in the Black Prince's wardrobe (*Pat.* 181, m. 13).

<sup>4</sup> For example, John Houghton, who had a king's writ of aid in his favour, dated June 6, 1343 (*C.P.R.*, 1343-45, p. 52), and was still acting Jan. 28, 1348 (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144, f. 152); Gilbert Crosseby, with a similar writ dated Aug. 4, 1349 (*C.P.R.*, 1348-50, p. 388, also *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 279, f. 47). Crosseby was also appointed to levy moneys arising from the green wax. Accounts of the keeper of the fees survive in *M.A.* 1095/3, 4, 5, 6.

<sup>5</sup> As early as 1351 a lieutenant had been necessary (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 8).

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.* f. 147d. The groups were (1) Oxford, Northampton, Bedford, Hertford, Essex, Cambridge, Huntingdon, Norfolk and Suffolk; (2) Berks, Wilts, Hants, Surrey, Sussex, Bucks, Middlesex; (3) Rutland, Lincoln, Nottingham, Derby, Warwick; (4) Somerset, Dorset, Gloucester, Worcester, Salop, Staffs, Warwick, Leicester.



interests of their present holder, but some degree of devolution proved essential to efficiency.

The growth of a permanent centralised system of government—more enduring than the tentative experiments towards devolution—is the outstanding feature of the Black Prince's administration. It is evident throughout this survey that the necessity of carrying on the government of his lands during his absence was one of the most potent factors in maintaining this centralised government. The first of the prince's protracted absences (1346–47) was while he was still a minor, and the king, as his "administrator and legitimate guardian,"<sup>1</sup> made arrangements for the continued good governance of his lands. A group of eminent persons, including prominent members of the king's own council, and also Peter Gildesburgh, as representative of the prince's administrative system,<sup>2</sup> were given power to govern all the prince's lands and lordships,<sup>3</sup> to present to vacant churches, to issue licences for ecclesiastical elections, to remove ministers, receive homages, and so on.<sup>4</sup> These arrangements reveal a close relationship between the king's and the prince's government. In virtue of this commission the archbishop of Canterbury witnessed all letters issued under the prince's seal during his absence, and a memorandum notes the observance of the necessary formalities, on the issue of a licence to elect a bishop.<sup>5</sup> Other

<sup>1</sup> ". . . tanquam administrator sive curator legitimus Edwardi . . . infra pubertatis annos constituti." Compare references to the king's son "infra etatem existens."

<sup>2</sup> The commission consisted of the archbishop of Canterbury (John Stratford, chief of the king's council in 1346), the bishop of Winchester (William Edington, then treasurer of England), Thomas Berkeley, William Sharesull, Robert Sadington, chief baron of the exchequer, knights, and Peter Gildesburgh, clerk. Three or more of these persons could act alone, of whom the archbishop or bishop was to be one.

<sup>3</sup> "damus et concedimus . . . plenam potestatem et mandatum speciale de regimine ac custodia omnium terrarum et dominiorum. . . ."

<sup>4</sup> All these details are from *M.R.*, *L.T.R.* 118, communia, Trinity, recorda, m. 11. Cf. *C.P.R.*, 1345–48, p. 123.

<sup>5</sup> When a licence was issued to elect the bishop of Llandaff, a note was made after its entry in the prince's register of letters that it had been sealed in the council chamber at Westminster, in the presence of various persons, including three of the commissioners, namely, the archbishop of Canterbury, the bishop of Winchester and Robert Sadington (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 144, f. 34). The prince's seal was solemnly opened before the commissioners and returned to a sealed bag. Thus it was hoped to avoid such a disputed election as had previously perplexed the king. (See B. Wilkinson, "The Authorisation of Chancery Writs under Edward III.," *Bull. J.R.L.* viii. p. 112.)

letters were also issued by the king in his son's favour: for instance, he was given power to make his will,<sup>1</sup> and Peter Gildesburgh was authorised to make executions on his behalf in the exchequer and chancery, and before the justices of both benches, and to be the prince's attorney.<sup>2</sup> The lord Edward was sixteen when he left England, seventeen on his return from the wars; he was now a knight with valorous deeds to his credit, and we hear no more of his lawful guardian; the prince had come of age.

Similar arrangements were always made in future when the prince went abroad, though they rested more largely in his own hands. Yet at such times ministers of the king frequently retained some nominal responsibility at the forefront of his administration, as for instance Edington, bishop of Winchester in 1355.<sup>3</sup> The prince's attorneys included royal officials as well as his own.<sup>4</sup> Yet there is little evidence of any active royal supervision of his officials during his seven years' sojourn in Gascony; his council in England was then the ruling power in his home administration,<sup>5</sup> and more especially the knights Richard Stafford and John Delves.

Although the Black Prince's administration gradually became centralised in the neighbourhood of London, its business was not continuously carried on or directed from any one place. The prince's quarters within the palace of Westminster and his wardrobe in the Old Jewry were the most permanent places for the transaction of his business. But, as in all ages, the home of a minister might witness important decisions, no less than official premises; thus we read of letters authorised by Wingfield from his own house, he being in his bed,<sup>6</sup> or from the chimney corner

<sup>1</sup> By a writ of June 25, 1346, enrolled in *M.R.*, *L.T.R.* 118.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* Compare *Treaty Roll*, 22, m. 8. Thomas Tochewick and John Cory were at the same time empowered to prosecute and defend all pleas on the prince's behalf in any court in England.

<sup>3</sup> The prince's letters during this absence were normally issued "by the advice of the bishop of Winchester."

<sup>4</sup> *A.C.* xl. 148, 149. The attorneys were on the one hand the bishop of Winchester, chancellor of England, the bishop of Rochester, treasurer, Richard earl of Arundel, and David Wollere; on the other, John Delves, William Spridlington, Peter Lacy and Richard Wolveston. Compare a grant to the last four in *C.P.R.*, 1358-61, p. 296.

<sup>5</sup> Thus the receiver-general expended more than £23,000 "par comandement de nous meismes come par avis et assent de notre conseil en Engleterre" (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 267d).

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.* f. 124 (Aug. 1357).

of his room.<sup>1</sup> For a time, on his triumphant return from the exploits of Poitiers, the prince held his court at the bishop of Ely's palace, and here he kept his favourite feast of the Trinity with befitting ceremony.<sup>2</sup> Still earlier Pulteney's Inn in Candlewick Street was in his possession,<sup>3</sup> and was a centre of administrative activity; an additional house was also rented in this neighbourhood,<sup>4</sup> where the prince's ministers met upon occasion.<sup>5</sup> For a time he held a "corner shop" in Lombard Street,<sup>6</sup> and a house on Fish Street Hill.<sup>7</sup> Without the city, he stayed at the abbot of Westminster's manor-house of "La Neite,"<sup>8</sup> at the manor of Poplar,<sup>9</sup> and also, of course, frequently at his manor of

<sup>1</sup> *M.B.E., T.R.* 279, f. 164 (March 1358).

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* 278, f. 118d (1357). Ely Place was then forfeit in the king's hands.

<sup>3</sup> Sir John Pulteney, four times lord-mayor of London (Stow, i. p. 236), died in 1349 (see *Cal. Inq.* ix. no. 183 for his inquisition post-mortem). By his will he left his principal mansion in Candlewick Street to his widow, Margaret, during her widowhood, with remainder to their young son William. In the event of her marriage during William's minority Pulteney's Inn was to go to William Clinton, earl of Huntingdon. Some time between March (*C.C.R.*, 1349-54, p. 167) and Sept. 1350 (*ib.* p. 249) she had married again, but on Clinton's death in 1354 his inquisition post-mortem made no reference to Pulteney's Inn. Perhaps the prince had already acquired it from the earl, who was for long a member of his council. In 1354 a Richard Kinderton was keeper of the prince's "inn in London" (*M.B.E., T.R.* 278, f. 64), and from July 8, 1355, a John Bassingbourne was paid for the custody of Pulteney's Inn (*ib.* f. 110). The prince occupied it for the next four years, when he restored it to Margaret and her husband, Nicholas Loveyne (*ib.* f. 182d).

<sup>4</sup> This house was rented from the master and college of St. Lawrence Pulteney as early as June 1352 (*ib.* f. 57). In Feb. 1358 the rent was two and a half years in arrear (*ib.* 137).

<sup>5</sup> For instance, in July 1359, when Wingfield (governor) charged Wolveston (keeper of the privy seal), in the presence of Blackburn (keeper of the wardrobe) and Thomas Rasen, to seal a certain obligation with the privy seal (*ib.* 172d). In April 1355 the prince's "gentes de familia" brought a fraudulent "purveyor to the prince" before a sheriff of the city (A. H. Thomas, *Calendar of Plea and Memoranda Rolls of the City of London, 1323-64*, p. 251), an incident which testifies to the familiarity of the prince's presence there.

<sup>6</sup> *M.B.E., T.R.* 278, f. 247d. Cf. a corner house with the shop and solar above "in vico qui vocatur Lumbardstrete ex parte boreali cuiusdam vici in cornerio de Berchen' Lane" (*Pipe* 208, 1362-63, London and Middlesex).

<sup>7</sup> ". . . one great house for the most part builded of stone . . ."—Stow, i. p. 216.

<sup>8</sup> Viz. in 1362, when privy-seal letters were often issued there. For this manor-house see E. H. Pearce, *Walter de Wenlok*, p. 69.

<sup>9</sup> Poplar, like Pulteney's Inn, had belonged to John Pulteney before his death in 1349; it was held from the bishop of London (*Cal. Inq.* ix. p. 169).



Kennington, where he possibly died.<sup>1</sup> Even Kennington, however, did not rival in magnificence or influence John of Gaunt's palace of the Savoy.

Fuller knowledge of the personnel which manned the Black Prince's administrative machine, during the last dozen years of his life, might cast some little light upon his position in English politics after his return from Aquitaine. There is unfortunately no obvious place to seek such information, for the records of the prince's administration almost cease. An inquiry over a wider field might possibly prove fruitful, but I have not been able to attempt this. Many of the notable figures of his prime, such men as Gildesburgh, Wingfield, Delves and Chandos, had passed away; their successors only came to the fore during this last period when records are few. The most intimate advisers of the prince's last years were, however, certainly included amongst the executors of his will. The magnates there named were John of Gaunt, "my brother of Spain"; William of Wykeham, bishop of Winchester; John Harewell, bishop of Bath and Wells; William Spridlington, bishop of St. Asaph: the remaining executors were Robert Walsham, the prince's confessor, Hugh Segrave, Alan Stokes and John Fordham.<sup>2</sup> Of all these, Spridlington had worked for the longest period in the prince's service, since 1348 at least;<sup>3</sup> Harewell and Robert Walsham had become conspicuous soon after his departure to Aquitaine;<sup>4</sup> Segrave, Stokes and Fordham were still more recent confidants.<sup>5</sup> John of Gaunt, Wykeham and Robert Walsham probably never actually worked as executors,<sup>6</sup> but for some years

<sup>1</sup> It was to Kennington that Richard Lyons sent his ill-received present of a barrel of gold (*Anon. Chron.* p. 92). See *D.N.B.* for conflicting evidence as to the place of the prince's death. His will was made "in our chamber within the palace of our lord the king at Westminster" on June 7, 1376 (Nichols, *Royal Wills*, p. 66), and he died on June 8.

<sup>2</sup> Nichols, *Royal Wills*.

<sup>3</sup> For Spridlington see above, p. 337, n. 7.

<sup>4</sup> For Harewell see above, p. 376, n. 5. Robert Walsham was sub-dean of the prince's chapel as early as 1357 (*C. Pap. Reg. Pet.* i. p. 295), and in 1361 the prince petitioned the pope on his behalf (*ib.* p. 381). He is described as confessor in 1366 (*ib.* p. 524) and subsequently.

<sup>5</sup> For Segrave see p. 391, n. 6, for Stokes, p. 328, for Fordham, p. 379.

<sup>6</sup> The prince's will was proved before the archbishop of Canterbury on June 10, 1376, "in quadam camera infra sceptra domus fratrum predicatorum conventus London' situata." Administration of the prince's goods within the province of Canterbury was then granted to Harewell, Spridlington, Segrave, Stokes and Fordham. *M.R.*, *K.R.* 152, communia, Trinity, recorda. I can

the others were busy with winding up the prince's affairs.<sup>1</sup> The inclusion of Lancaster's name amongst the nominated executors certainly suggests that any friction there may have been between the brothers did not lie very deep.

The prince's political leanings during these crucial years have been variously interpreted. The "flower of all the chivalry of the world"<sup>2</sup> returned a disappointed man from his stricken principality, an invalid who must needs be carried in his litter. He had lost Gascony. His expedition to aid the cause of legitimate monarchy in Spain had ended in failure despite the valour of his troops, the fleeting brilliance of his diplomatic vision; never again did his affairs prosper. For such a man the seclusion of Berkhamsted appears indeed more probable than the rough and tumble of active politics. In the ministerial crisis of March 1371, immediately after the prince's return from Aquitaine,<sup>3</sup> his clerk Peter Lacy was removed from the office of keeper of the king's privy seal, and probably also from the office of prince's receiver-general.<sup>4</sup> It is unlikely that the prince sympathised with the discontented party: neither the demand for a more vigorous prosecution of the war nor the cry of anti-clericalism can have appealed to him; and Lacy was an old and trusted minister. The prince's personal attitude in 1373 and 1376 is more obscure—on each occasion some of his friends play a definite part in politics, without his disapproval, at least, if not necessarily at his instigation. John Harewell, his confidential adviser, was one of the committee chosen by the commons from the lords in 1373; the bishop of Winchester and the earls of March and

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find no evidence that Lancaster, Wykeham or Walsham applied for administration, nor are they ever found acting as executors.

<sup>1</sup> Thus in 1379 these five executors are found jointly issuing letters patent of acquittance under their seals pendent (*Gasc.* 93, m. 6). Compare *A.P.* 333, no. 104, a petition to Segrave, Spridlington and Fordham as executors; also letters of acquittance of Segrave and Fordham in Dec. 1376 (*M.A.* 772/9). Segrave was the most active executor; he it was who on June 30, 1376, came into the exchequer before the barons, exhibited the will, and described how probate had been granted (*M.R.*, *K.R.* 152, *loc. cit.*). He was appointed steward of the lands of the deceased prince in July (*C.P.R.*, 1374-77, p. 293); he had been the prince's steward of lands since 1372 (*ib.*, 1377-81, p. 34). The advantages of exchequer procedure were placed at the disposal of the executors to expedite their business on June 23, 1376 (*M.R.*, *K.R.* 152, brev. dir. bar., Trin. m. 7d). Miss Broome kindly drew my attention to this entry.

<sup>2</sup> Froissart, *Chroniques* (ed. Luce), vii. p. 53.

<sup>3</sup> The prince was in London by February.

<sup>4</sup> See above, p. 328.

Salisbury, who were also members of that committee, had all been closely associated with him in the past, but their attitude at that time is difficult to interpret.<sup>1</sup> Could the chronicler of St. Mary's, York, be proved more trustworthy than the parliament roll, it would appear that Harewell was a member of the similar committee of 1376,<sup>2</sup> a committee definitely hostile to the government; and the theory that the committee of 1373 was also critical would undoubtedly be strengthened.<sup>3</sup> The chronicler is so well informed about this parliament that it is difficult to reject his authority. The attitude of Richard Stafford in 1376 is another enigma. He had served the prince so long and faithfully that it would seem almost certain that the two still worked in harmony; he too was for a time a member of the lords' committee which guided the deliberations of the Good Parliament, but he was removed, probably before the prince's death,<sup>4</sup> presumably because he was suspected of court sympathies. The commons believed they had the prince's support; the association of such intimates as Harewell and Stafford is suggestive; but there can be no conclusive proof of the prince's interest until further evidence is revealed.

While the prince's personal actions and attitude remain obscure, it is idle to assume he was swayed by any bitter hostility to his brother John. There is remarkably little evidence that they were ever at issue, though circumstances must have tended to foment jealousy between them. Further knowledge of Edward's administrative personnel would make it possible to compare the influence of his and his brother's followers, for the latter is amply indicated. Similarly, fuller information might show more precisely how many of the prince's followers remained loyal to his widow and to his son, and make it possible to assess their political significance. Their influence was certainly considerable.<sup>5</sup> The prince was ever a generous if an exacting master, and Richard, *joenes et petiz*, reaped the benefit when the prince's familiars fulfilled the requests of their dying lord with fidelity.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See above, iii. p. 286.

<sup>2</sup> *Anon. Chron.* p. 84. See above, iii. p. 295, n. 2.

<sup>3</sup> For an interpretation of the years 1371-76, conflicting with that given above, iii. chapter ix. section 6, see Wilkinson, *Chancery*, pp. 123-146.

<sup>4</sup> *Anon. Chron.* p. 92.

<sup>5</sup> See above, iii. pp. 327-332.

<sup>6</sup> *Chandos Herald*, ed. Pope and Lodge, pp. 128-129.



The intricate organisation of all the Black Prince's business through the medium of his expanded household made possible his military and political career; it had some permanence as a model for the future;<sup>1</sup> its development illustrates those general tendencies which underlie all administrative history in the fourteenth century.

## SECTION II

### PART II

#### THE DIPLOMATIC OF THE BLACK PRINCE'S CENTRAL SECRETARIAL DEPARTMENTS<sup>2</sup>

Little work has yet been done in England on the secretarial arrangements of magnates or of less important persons,<sup>3</sup> and current ideas are too largely founded on a knowledge of the king's practice alone. For instance, it is only now beginning to be apparent that a great seal, which could be used anywhere, was not an invariable feature of such chanceries in the fourteenth century, and that a privy seal was sometimes the most important and ubiquitous seal in a magnate's possession.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, little is known of the diplomatic forms usual in baronial letters, and how far such documents were stereotyped or simplified by increasing business. Centralisation, the keynote of all seignorial organisation by the fourteenth century, left its mark on secretarial arrangements as elsewhere. Even as baronial administrative developments were moving in channels parallel to those earlier taken by the national government departments, whether from some natural trend of development or merely in imitation, so

<sup>1</sup> As late as the reign of Edward IV., Cornish officials and auditors of the accounts of ministers in Cheshire and N. Wales were to be paid as in the time of Edward, eldest son of Edward III. (*C.P.R.*, 1461-67).

<sup>2</sup> I am much indebted to Mr. V. H. Galbraith for kindly reading the MS. of this sub-section.

<sup>3</sup> More materials are available for a study of French seignorial documents, though Giry lamented the backwardness of knowledge of these when he wrote his *Manuel de diplomatie*; see p. 813, n.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, Prof. Baldwin's article on "The Chancery of the Duchy of Lancaster" (*Bull. I.H.R.* iv., especially pp. 132-133, 136-137). Also my article on "The Administrative Chancery of the Black Prince before 1362" in *Essays presented to T. F. Tout*.

secretarial and diplomatic usage tended in the main to follow royal custom. Until the masses of seignorial documents and private deeds are more accessible in print, a comparative survey of their diplomatic will remain difficult. But many letters of both the Black Prince and his brother, John of Gaunt,<sup>1</sup> are, or soon will be, available, and then the two most important baronial secretariats of the fourteenth century can be more closely scrutinised. The time has, therefore, perhaps come for a preliminary survey of a part of the ground.

For the purposes of this discussion, the diplomatic of the Black Prince's local chanceries of Wales and Chester has been excluded. Here he was the heir to local traditions of some standing, and though doubtless methods were stereotyped during the unprecedented continuity of his rule, the subject is only indirectly connected with developments from the household, and is hardly at all personal to the Black Prince. These local chanceries with the seals, analogous to great seals,<sup>2</sup> round which they revolved, operated to some extent independently and on their own authority, though they were supervised and directed in matters outside their ordinary routine by warrants from the prince's central privy seal department, or more rarely under his personal seals in use abroad.<sup>3</sup> Thus they fall outside the scope of a discussion of his central secretariats. Perhaps illogically, however, some reference is here made to the diplomatic of the prince's various seals used in Gascony. When the prince was in Gascony in person the privy seal he used abroad had at times as much force and interest as his seal of absence in London, and was part of a similar and interdependent machinery of government.<sup>4</sup> The chancery of Gascony, on the other hand, was local in its operation, but it possibly owed its existence to the prince's presence and office in Aquitaine,<sup>5</sup> and its work cannot easily be distinguished from that of the prince's other seals in use there. The letters now to be discussed were issued under the prince's ordinary privy seals used at home or abroad, his seal as lieutenant in Gascony, 1355-57,

<sup>1</sup> One volume of John of Gaunt's surviving registers was published by Mr. Armitage-Smith in two volumes in the Camden Series in 1911, and the other is in preparation in the same series.

<sup>2</sup> Such local seals, however, were normally seals "of one piece."

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 368.

<sup>4</sup> See above, p. 374.

<sup>5</sup> Above, pp. 305, 376.

his great seal as prince of Aquitaine, and his secret seals and signet.

The greater number of the original instruments issued by the Black Prince surviving at the Public Record Office are now included amongst miscellaneous warrants concerning the palatinate of Chester (two files, some fifty letters);<sup>1</sup> and in the categories of Ancient Correspondence, Chancery Warrants and Exchequer Accounts. Some thirty letters survive in Ancient Correspondence.<sup>2</sup> Among the Chancery Warrants three files contain instruments (some hundred and eighty in number) issued by the Black Prince as keeper of England;<sup>3</sup> other isolated letters of the prince on his own personal behalf (approximately twenty in all) survive in two other files.<sup>4</sup> The latter are usually the prince's warrants for the issue of protections or pardons in favour of soldiers going abroad in his own or the king's service; other such warrants on his behalf were, however, issued by his ministers under their own seals.<sup>5</sup> Some thirty-five of the prince's letters are included amongst documents subsidiary to the accounts of the constable of Bordeaux,<sup>6</sup> and occasional letters are also found elsewhere amongst Exchequer Accounts,<sup>7</sup> and in Exchequer

<sup>1</sup> *Chester*, 1/1, parts 1 and 2.

<sup>2</sup> See *P.R.O., Lists and Indexes*, xv. Index.

<sup>3</sup> *C.W. I.*, 1532, 1533, 1534.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib. I.*, 1746 and 1771.

<sup>5</sup> Some caution is needed in using the Chancery Warrants which have been tentatively assigned by the P.R.O. to the prince of Wales in *C.W.*, 1746. Certainly such warrants always refer to persons in the prince of Wales' service, but they may either be given under one of the king's seals (*e.g. C.W.*, 1746, no. 45, see below, p. 422, n. 7), or more often under the signet of one of his ministers: *e.g.* a warrant for protection in favour of John Salter going "ad partes transmarinas" with the prince, was given "per Johannem de Wingfeld" (*ib.* no. 32), and is sealed *plaqué*, on the front, with a signet of c. 24 mms. diameter. This is Wingfield's seal, and not the Black Prince's. A protection in favour of John Salter going to Gascony with the prince was granted by the king on July 1, 1355 (*Gasc.* 67, m. 9), and the note of warrant is "per testimonium Johannis de Wyngfeld." Similarly a warrant, by testimony of Peter Lacy, in favour of Stephen Cosington and others, bears a seal *plaqué* of c. 26 mms. (*C.W.*, 1746, no. 33), and may be dated June 25, 1364, by reference to *Gasc.* 77, m. 2. This protection was given "per testimonium Petri de Lacy clerici." Thus the original warrant was sealed with Lacy's signet, and was issued on behalf of the Black Prince, though not by him, as the pencilled P.R.O. note of his name would suggest.

<sup>6</sup> *E.A.* 169/2; 171/5 (containing some sixteen letters); 171/4 (file i. part 3 and file ii.); 172/1 and 172/3, all for the years 1356 and 1357. Also *ib.* 176/20, nos. 25, 26 and 37, for letters from Gascony after 1362.

<sup>7</sup> *E.g. E.A.* 178/19; 212/1 (several letters).



Miscellanea,<sup>1</sup> Exchequer Warrants of Issue<sup>2</sup> (letters as keeper of England), Diplomatic Documents,<sup>3</sup> Ancient Deeds,<sup>4</sup> Chancery Miscellanea,<sup>5</sup> etc. There are doubtless others which I have not succeeded in tracing, as, for instance, among the writs filed with inquisitions.<sup>6</sup> There are apparently very few letters of the Black Prince in the British Museum;<sup>7</sup> and though some letters doubtless survive in other libraries,<sup>8</sup> and in private collections,<sup>9</sup> our range is not likely to be very greatly extended. In the nature of things, documents of a routine and uniform character (such as chancery warrants) stand the greatest chance of survival, and, therefore, the three hundred and thirty letters, approximately, at the Public Record Office do not afford much variety of scope and form. As in the case of the king's privy seal department, the mass of surviving material elucidates the diplomatic of warrants; the more interesting diplomatic of the seal's original jurisdiction is but rarely revealed.

Apart from original letters, the forms of documents issued by the Black Prince's "chancery" may be found in contemporary enrolments, as, for instance, amongst the Cheshire recognisance or plea rolls, the prince's escheators' or other ministers' accounts, the registers of the prince's letters, or, more especially in the reign of Richard II., in the chancery rolls of the kingdom, where *inspeximus* of the prince's letters by the king are not uncommon.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *E.g. Exch. Misc.* 5/39.

<sup>2</sup> *Exch. of Rec. Warrants of Issue* 4, files 24 and 25 (2 letters only).

<sup>3</sup> *Dipl. Docs. Exch.* 1106, 1107, 1632.

<sup>4</sup> *W.S. Anc. D.* 95; B. 9036, B. 10546.

<sup>5</sup> *Chanc. Misc.* 25/5, nos. 12, 15, 16 and 34/1/2 (*P.R.O. Museum Catalogue*, 1925, pp. 35-36).

<sup>6</sup> Only three such writs survive among the files of Cheshire inquisitions for the reign of Edward III. (Chester 3, nos. 1-7).

<sup>7</sup> See, however, *Ad. Ch.* 43,258 (wrongly dated by the British Museum as 1374 instead of 1364), and 11,308.

<sup>8</sup> There are none, however, at the Office of the Duchy of Cornwall. One letter survives among the muniments of the Corporation of Chester.

<sup>9</sup> See, *e.g.*, *Hist. MSS. Comm. Var. Coll.* II. 293 (MSS. of Lord Edmund Talbot), also *Cheshire Sheaf*, 4155 (Shakerley MSS.); *Bull. J.R.L.* vii. i. (Jodrell MSS.), etc. Also below, p. 416, n. 5 (Duke of Bedford's MSS.).

<sup>10</sup> Such letters are not usually given in a complete form in the calendars of chancery rolls. In the index of *C.P.R.*, 1377-81, there are eighty-eight page references to letters patent of the Black Prince, and usually there are several letters on each page. Reference to the actual roll in a few instances has shown me that some information on the diplomatic of the prince's secretariat would probably be found on the roll in the case of each of these letters.

Almost contemporary *vidimus* under various Gascon seals<sup>1</sup> of documents issued by the prince of Aquitaine are found amongst documents subsidiary to the accounts of the constable of Bordeaux,<sup>2</sup> while numerous letters of this kind preserve the form of the prince's earlier letters issued as lieutenant in Gascony (1355-1357)<sup>3</sup> (though these have less diplomatic interest); certificates of publication of his letters in Gascony survive amongst Chancery Miscellanea;<sup>4</sup> and enrolments of both classes are numerous on the Gascon rolls. The most prolific of printed sources are the *Archives historiques de la Gironde*, which print some twenty-five of the prince's letters issued in Gascony<sup>5</sup> and many *vidimus* under local seals, while other collections make a smaller contribution.<sup>6</sup> The following sketch of the diplomatic of the prince's "chancery" is based upon a survey both of these original letters and of enrolments and other transcripts; through the nature of the evidence on which it is based it cannot aim at completeness.

It is probable that the Black Prince had no great seal for use in England.<sup>7</sup> The mass of his correspondence was authorised by the privy seal, sometimes known as the "seal."<sup>8</sup> This was a seal with one face, but nevertheless it was frequently used in the same way as the king's great, or double-faced, seal. Its sphere was limited only by the traditional functions of certain local official seals, whose use, however, it might also warrant upon occasion; it corresponded, in fact, on the one hand to the king's great seal, on the other to his privy seal.<sup>9</sup> It is therefore hardly surprising that in some respects the instruments issued by the prince follow the usage of the chancery, in others the usage of the king's privy seal department. The result was occasionally a curious hybrid with an interest of its own.

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 303-304. The descriptions of the document preceding the actual transcript in such copies frequently give details of the method of sealing and the seal, which are not given by the form of the letter itself, and thus these descriptions are sometimes very useful.

<sup>2</sup> *E.g.* *E.A.* 180/1, nos. 6, 13, 39, 41, 43 (1369-70).

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 402, n. 6.

<sup>4</sup> *Chanc. Misc.* 25/5, nos. 10 and 11.

<sup>5</sup> See *Arch. hist. Gir.* vols. xx. and xl. for Index. Vols. xvi., xxxiv. and xxxvii. are the most fruitful.

<sup>6</sup> Thus there are some twenty of the prince's letters printed in Rymer's *Foedera*, many of which are from the Gascon Rolls.

<sup>7</sup> See above, p. 368; also *Essays presented to T. F. Tout*, pp. 321-334.

<sup>8</sup> See above, p. 369.

<sup>9</sup> See above, pp. 368-369.

The privy seal and "the seal" used by the Black Prince were probably identical.<sup>1</sup> References to "the seal" are more common in enrolments than in original letters, but the latter survive very rarely when issued in England, and thus it is hardly surprising that few survive which are specifically stated to have been issued under "the seal." Letters issued in Gascony in 1355-57 were often given under "the seal,"<sup>2</sup> but it would be rash to draw any general conclusions from a particular seal made for a particular purpose. Occasional letters issued in Gascony after 1362 also mention the seal.<sup>3</sup> There is a little evidence that the privy seal might be called "the seal" when attached by a queue,<sup>4</sup> but such a suggestion cannot be tested unless a number of original letters come to light. Certainly, after the prince went to the principality of Aquitaine in 1362, the seal left behind in London, which was similar to the privy seal formerly used there,<sup>5</sup> was sometimes,

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 369; also *Essays presented to T. F. Tout, loc. cit.* Instances of the use of the seal and privy seal in a similar way on similar letters are revealed in various confirmations of the prince's letters by Edward III. (e.g. *Foedera*, III. ii. 746), or Richard II. (*C.P.R.*, 1377-81, p. 161). This is clearly brought out in the actual roll (*Pat.* 300, m. 6).

<sup>2</sup> See *Bull. J.R.L.* vii. p. 116, also above, p. 374.

<sup>3</sup> E.g. *A.C.* xlii. 33, an undated letter in bad condition with little indication of what seal it was issued under, but probably under a privy seal. Also an inspection of a letter of Sept. 19, 1363, almost certainly issued under the great seal of Aquitaine, with white wax and silken strings (*Gasc.* 82, m. 10).

<sup>4</sup> For instance, a notification by the Black Prince that he had granted the fee farm of the city of Chester to the earl of Arundel was made by letters patent addressed to the mayor and citizens, "in witness whereof we have put our seal . . ." etc., Nov. 11, 1351 (Rupert Morris, *Chester*, p. 495). The seal and queue on the original at Chester are now attached by a modern paper clip, but as there are no other documents among the Chester muniments to which the queue could belong, one must assume that the association is correct. The seal is a privy seal of red wax. Compare *Ad. Ch.* 11308, which ends "en tesmoignance de ce nous avons fait mettre nostre seal a ses presentes. Don souz nostre seal." This seal was also certainly a privy seal (see below, p. 425). An original letter patent of formal nature of 1359 was issued under the privy seal, attached by silken cords (see below, pp. 411, 423-424); but does not itself refer to the seal under which it was issued. One of the letters under the seal in Gascony after 1362 (note 3 above) had no queue (*Gasc.* 82, m. 10); the others give no evidence as to how they were sealed. "The seal used before we were prince of Aquitaine" (*Dipl. Docs. Exch.* 1106 and 1107) was also a privy seal. I know of no other original letters sealed on a queue apart from letters issued in Gascony, 1355-57, which normally refer to "the seal" and have pendent seals. However, an indenture of Oct. 1, 1354, sealed on a double queue, states that it was sealed with the privy seal (see below, p. 416, n. 5).

<sup>5</sup> See, for instance, the prince's registers which continue in the same form after 1362 as before. Also the Cheshire recognisance rolls *passim*, where warrants under the prince's seal in London are enrolled in the same way as his



though not always, known as "the seal,"<sup>1</sup> perhaps to distinguish it from the privy seal which accompanied his person. This practice does not seem to have persisted after his resignation of the principality of Aquitaine and his return to England.<sup>2</sup> Use of the description "the seal" does not seem at any time to have carried with it a specialised meaning; in England always, abroad sometimes, it referred to the privy seal; in Gascony it was also sometimes used to describe the prince's seal as lieutenant in Gascony, 1355-57, and also the great seal of Aquitaine after 1362.

The Black Prince's letters were usually written on parchment, though paper was sometimes used, especially in Gascony; letters under the secret seal in particular were frequently written on paper. The wax used for sealing the prince's letters was usually red, except in the case of the great seal of Aquitaine, which was in essence a local or official seal, and like the prince's seals of Chester, Carnarvon, or Carmarthen, or the king's great seal, was never used with the red wax which still normally indicated a personal or household seal. It is probable that English chancery custom<sup>3</sup> was followed in the chancery of Gascony, for green<sup>4</sup> and white<sup>5</sup> wax are both used for the great seal of Aquitaine. French was used more often than Latin in all the prince's secretarial departments, but there seems to have been little uniformity of practice; protections, for example, seem to have been issued indiscriminately in Latin or French. Generally Latin was used in letters to ecclesiastical persons, or in formal charters and letters patent, while French was the medium of everyday business.

All the prince's instruments normally begin with his name

earlier letters under the privy seal had been. Moreover, the marginal heading usually still describes them as letters of privy seal.

<sup>1</sup> *E.g. Ad. Ch.* 43, 258 (July 4, 1364). See also *Recog.* 47, 48, etc.

<sup>2</sup> *Chester* 1/1, part 2, where letters of 1373 and 1374 are given under the privy seal.

<sup>3</sup> See Maxwell-Lyte, p. 309. But white wax was used on *lacs de soie* in Gascony (*Gasc.* 82, m. 10), not only on a queue.

<sup>4</sup> *E.g. E.A.* 178/19; *Exch. T.R., Scotch Documents Box* 26 (dark wax, either green or brown). These are original documents; the certificates of publication of many documents also often refer to green wax.

<sup>5</sup> I have seen no original letter sealed with white wax, but many *vidimus* refer to such seals, *e.g. Arch. hist. Gir.* xxxiv. p. 190. Compare an original in the archives of Agen, *ib.* p. 193. An original among the archives of the Basses-Pyrénées (*ib.* vi. p. 371) is said to be sealed with brown wax. This is perhaps the yellowish brown or uncoloured wax, commonly called white.

and title, with the exception of bills and other warrants of privy seal, an occasional letter patent under the privy seal,<sup>1</sup> and instruments under the secret seal and signet.<sup>2</sup> The normal title is in the form "Edward first born son of the illustrious king of England and of France, prince of Wales, duke of Cornwall and earl of Chester"<sup>3</sup>—with the omission of the reference to France, or the alteration of the Black Prince's title, according to the position at the moment. To recapitulate, he was earl of Cornwall only from March 18, 1333, to March 29, 1337, duke of Cornwall as well till May 12, 1343, then also prince of Wales till July 19, 1362. After that date till November 3, 1372, he was called prince of Aquitaine and Wales, duke of Cornwall and earl of Chester; after 1372 his titles were the same as in 1343–62. In addition, while he was "keeper of England" in 1338, 1339, 1340 and 1342, that phrase was added to his title in the superscription of letters issued in his capacity as keeper.<sup>4</sup> When the prince was in Gascony from 1355 to 1357, the title of *capitaneus et ipsius genitoris nostri in ducatu Aquitannie locum tenens* was sometimes added to his normal title,<sup>5</sup> and the words *dei gracia* were often inserted before the description of Edward III. as king of England and France.

Whereas Edward III. used the title of king of France in his letters from January 1340, the son's letters did not refer to his father in this way until July 1340.<sup>6</sup> Even in letters issued by the prince in Gascony from 1355 to 1357, England was always placed before France in the reference to Edward III.,<sup>7</sup> but after

<sup>1</sup> Beginning "Sciant presentes et futuri quod nos Edwardus . . . etc." (e.g. *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 98d).

<sup>2</sup> A letter to the prince's mother begins "ma tres chere et tres redoutee dame et miere, ieo me recomances a votre hautesse, od toutes les reverences q'ieo sai ou puis houmblement enrequerant votre beneceon"; it was perhaps given under the secret seal or signet, but the seal is not stated (*A.C.* liv. 29).

<sup>3</sup> In Latin, "Edwardus illustris regis Anglie et Francie primogenitus," etc.; in French, "Edward eisne filz au (or du) noble roi Dengleterre et de France."

<sup>4</sup> His own personal letters did not contain the phrase.

<sup>5</sup> E.g. *Foedera*, III. i. 399, 395, etc. But this practice was not invariable; see, e.g., *E.A.* 169/2, part 2, no. 29; 176/20, no. 33.

<sup>6</sup> A letter of July 5, 1340, does not mention the king of France (*C.W.* 1534/19), while one of July 11 does (*ib.* 20); all later letters follow this latter course.

<sup>7</sup> *Foedera*, III. i. *passim*. Yet, strangely enough, in the ratification of the peace of Brétigny (May 1360), in which Edward III.'s claim to the French throne was abandoned, the prince of Wales calls himself "son of the noble king of France and England": Delachenal, ii. p. 239.

the king's resumption of the title in June 1369, France always preceded England in letters issued by the prince abroad,<sup>1</sup> though in letters issued in England the normal practice of the chancery was followed.<sup>2</sup> In September 1366 the Black Prince was promised the empty titles of lord of Biscay and Castro Urdiales, which were certainly used in his Gascon letters after October 1367,<sup>3</sup> if not earlier;<sup>4</sup> but it is not certain that they were normally used in England.<sup>5</sup>

The French regnal year in the ratification appears, of course, at the same time as the reference to France in the superscription; it precedes or follows the English regnal year on the same principles. But it was unusual to include the regnal year at all in letters issued in Gascony, so that a reference to France in the ratification rarely, if ever, appears before a reference to England. Nor does the practice of the Black Prince's secretariats in regard to the inclusion or exclusion of the regnal year seem to have been fixed; it is by no means unusual, as in the case of the king's letters,<sup>6</sup> to find a privy seal letter dated only by the day and month,<sup>7</sup> in the same way as letters of secret seal.

All the prince's letters issued in Gascony were normally dated by the year of grace.<sup>8</sup> Despite a little evidence to the contrary,<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The first I have found is dated Sept. 6, 1369 (*Gasc.* 85, m. 11), while letters of June 27 (*ib.* 83, m. 8) and Aug. 18 (*ib.* 94, m. 5) refer to the king of England only.

<sup>2</sup> *E.g.* *Chester* 1/1, part 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Gasc.* 83, m. 9.

<sup>4</sup> The title was not used as late as Mar. 11, 1367 (Rouquette, appendix no. xiv.). I have not found any letters between March and October of that year.

<sup>5</sup> In 1371 these titles were used on a letter issued in England (*Pat.* 295, m. 30). Other minor differences of titles are found in the principality of Aquitaine. Throughout 1363 and until May 1, 1364, the prince is normally called "eldest son of the illustrious (or noble) king of England by the grace of God"; and his other titles then follow; but after May 1364, indeed occasionally before that date, *dei gracia* is omitted in referring to Edward III. The words are not included again in the titles used in Gascony.

<sup>6</sup> Déprez, pp. 51, 78, etc.

<sup>7</sup> *A.C.* xl. 164.

<sup>8</sup> This applies equally to letters issued under the prince's seal used in Gascony during his visit of 1355-57, under the later privy seals used in Gascony, and under the great seal of Aquitaine. Letters under the seal of the court of Gascony, and under local seals for contracts, were also always dated by the year of grace.

<sup>9</sup> A few letters under the Black Prince's seal used in Gascony, 1355-57, would seem to have been issued actually after his departure, if the year is taken as beginning on March 25, and illustrate the difficulty of dating his letters in Gascony with certainty. For example, a letter of obligation to pay certain sums to John Greilly, Captal de Buch and others was issued by the Black Prince



there is no doubt that the year was normally regarded as beginning with the 25th March following the 1st January from which we date the year ourselves ;<sup>1</sup> that is to say, a letter from Gascony which states it was issued in February 1356 was really issued in February 1357. Uniformity of custom in this respect in English official documents tends to make us unwary, and Gascon practice

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at Bordeaux, Feb. 12, 1357 (*Dipl. Docs. Exch.* 1682; *Facsimiles National MSS.* i. no. xxviii.; *Foedera*, III. i. p. 346). By ordinary Gascon usage this should mean Feb. 12, 1358, many months after the prince had left. It is clear, however, that 1357 was the actual date of the letter, for a part of the sum in question was paid from the exchequer of England on Nov. 14, 1357 (*I.R.* 389). On this occasion the prince was acting on his father's behalf, and therefore the sum came from the exchequer. My remarks in *Bull. J.R.L.* vii. p. 114 about this document are wrong, and founded on a misunderstanding of the exchequer year. Similarly another letter of obligation, dated March 20, 1357 (*W.S. Anc. D.* 95), was actually issued in 1357, not 1358, for the payment, in consequence, also from the national exchequer, was made to Robert Hake, master of *The George* of Sidmouth, on July 17, 1357 (*I.R.* 387). Thus documents which would come within the purview of the English exchequer were not dated according to Gascon custom, but it is odd that the style of Christmas rather than the style of the Annunciation should have been used for English consumption as late as the middle of the fourteenth century. One other extremely puzzling case occurs of a letter issued on "sexta die introitus mensis Aprilis anno domini . . ." 1358 (*E.A.* 171/4, file 3, no. 2). This presumably refers to April 6, 1358, a full year after the prince's return. For another instance of dating by the introit see Moisant, p. 192. Such exceptions, which I cannot explain, are, however, nothing like as numerous as the exceptions which would be found to any other explanation of the beginning of the year in Gascony. I no longer think that the prince left his seal behind for use in Gascony, as I have previously suggested (*Bull. J.R.L.* vii. p. 116). Other evidence indicates that he took it back with him and used it in England (see later, pp. 423-424).

<sup>1</sup> "The reckoning of the year from Lady Day was steadily gaining ground in the dominions of the English king" (R. L. Poole, "The Beginning of the year in the Middle Ages," *Proceedings of the British Academy*, vol. x. p. 22). Cf. Giry, p. 116, but contrast *ib.* p. 109, where the "style of the Nativity" is said to have been found in the lands of the Plantagenets and later in all parts of France under English domination. There must certainly have been considerable variation in usage throughout the various lands which composed the principality of Aquitaine, though it is unlikely that the prince's clerks varied their habits to any great extent. In any case, the evidence of the prince's own letters, issued during the visit of 1355-57, is overwhelmingly in favour of the style of the Annunciation (for exceptions see p. 408, n. 9). So are his letters after 1362, when an itinerary composed from their place of origin appears to agree with our knowledge of his movements from other sources. Moreover, letters issued in London after his return to England "under the privy seal we used in our principality of Aquitaine" (*Gasc.* 85, m. 11, cf. *ib.* m. 8), and concerned with Gascon business, are clearly dated according to the style of the Annunciation. For example, letters actually dated Jan. 1, 1371 (year of grace), mention also the regnal year, 45 Edward III., that is, our 1372 (*Gasc.* 85, m. 6); cf. *ib.* m. 8 (letters of Feb. 1371, 46 Edward III., also 1372).

may easily lead to mistakes in dating.<sup>1</sup> It is not impossible that a more detailed study of letters issued from the parts of the principality of Aquitaine newly acquired from France would reveal further differences and ambiguities in conformity with varying local usage,<sup>2</sup> to which the prince's local servants, if not his central officials, may have seen fit to conform. His own letters are never, I think, dated by the years of his principate; but the dating of notarial documents sometimes refers in general to his reign.<sup>3</sup> Letters issued in England by the Black Prince for use in Gascony were also normally dated by the year of grace,<sup>4</sup> which was taken as beginning on March 25,<sup>5</sup> in contrast to the normal practice of Edward III.'s clerks in the king's correspondence. Dating by the Christian year was also sometimes used in other letters issued in England,<sup>6</sup> after the prince's return from Gascony,<sup>7</sup> though the practice was not invariable.<sup>8</sup>

As the privy seal was used for all purposes, it authorised even the Black Prince's most solemn acts. These formal letters followed closely the model of the royal chancery. I have found only one charter (and this is an *inseximus*) with the form of address "to archbishops, bishops, abbots . . .," etc., which characterised most royal charters. More usually the address was "to all and sundry who may see and hear this charter<sup>9</sup> . . .," or to some similar, but more restricted, body.<sup>10</sup> It is arguable that

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.* *Foedera*, III. ii. 750. I think that the letters dated January 1356 in appendix ii. of Moisant's *Le Prince Noir en Aquitaine* should probably be assigned to 1357.

<sup>2</sup> Giry shows how different methods of dating are found side by side, for instance, in Poitou (Giry, p. 115).

<sup>3</sup> *E.g.* "Actum fuit iiii. die exitus martis anno Domini millesimo trecentesimo sexagesimo tertio, regnante domino excellentissimo Eduardo illustrissimi domini nostri regis Anglie primogenito principato Aquitanie" (*Arch. hist. Gir.* xxix. p. 383). Cf. *ib.* xxxiv. p. 185.

<sup>4</sup> *E.g.* *Dipl. Docs. Exch.* 1106, a recital of the grant of the principality of Aquitaine to the lord Edward (July 19, 1362).

<sup>5</sup> See above, p. 409, n. 1.

<sup>6</sup> Compare the use of the Christian year very much earlier in the chancery of queen Philippa (*Chanc. Misc.* 9/58, m. 4d).

<sup>7</sup> *E.g.* in 1375 (*C. Ch. R.* v. 343). Sometimes the regnal year of England and France followed the Christian year—*e.g.* on Dec. 8, 1371 (from Chertsey) (*Pat.* 295, m. 30; the entry in *C.P.R.*, 1374-77, p. 343, does not give the form of the letter).

<sup>8</sup> *E.g.* *Chester*, 1/1, part 2.

<sup>9</sup> "Omnibus et singulis hanc cartam nostram inspecturis vel audituris."

<sup>10</sup> *E.g.* "All our tenants, subjects and faithful men."

these latter are really letters patent, but they are called charters by contemporaries. The disappearance of sharp distinctions between the various classes of letters is in accordance with the tendencies of the age, as is also shown in the king's chancery.<sup>1</sup> One such charter of the prince alone survives in the original; this is addressed "to all to whom these present letters shall have come," omits the formal preamble and injunction of royal charters, and concludes with the normal clause announcing execution of royal letters patent, *in cuius rei testimonium has litteras nostras fieri fecimus patentes*, followed by a list of witnesses, as in a royal charter.<sup>2</sup> In its elaborate ruling and capitals, its pendent seal<sup>3</sup> (one-faced, red wax mounted on a black support), its folded *répli* and green silken strings, it is clearly a charter in *format*, and so describes itself. But this original, unlike enrolments of similar letters, does not mention the seal that authorised it, though it was almost certainly the privy seal.<sup>4</sup> The preamble, *Intuitu Dei et pro salute anime nostre*, etc., which so often appears in royal charters, never seems to occur in such formal letters, though some less elaborate preamble may take its place;<sup>5</sup> and the injunction in royal charters, *quare volumus et firmiter precipimus . . .*, etc., was often, if not always, omitted. The list of witnesses, a normal feature of such charters, included the names of prominent members of the prince's council; often the prince's master and steward of the household, and his chamberlain, were named here and so described. Here, too, the model of the king's charter is followed. The clause of the royal charter "Given by our hand," etc., is frequently, but not always, replaced in the prince's charters by the phrase "Given under our privy seal"; or else the names of the witnesses are preceded by such a phrase as *in cuius rei testimonium hanc cartam nostram fieri fecimus sigillo nostro privato signatam*—a practice clearly borrowed from the similar phrase in use in royal letters patent. The dating by place and time is quite regular. Even documents in this solemn form might be written in French, though Latin was more usual; all such letters were concerned with grants or confirmations. It is impossible to tell, in the existing state of our

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 126.

<sup>2</sup> *Anc. D. B.* 9036.

<sup>3</sup> See below, pp. 423-424.

<sup>4</sup> See below, *ib.*

<sup>5</sup> *E.g.* "pro bono servicio," etc.



knowledge of the diplomatic forms normally used by kings' sons and other magnates, whether this particular form of instrument under the privy seal, part charter, part letter patent, was peculiar to the Black Prince's chancery.<sup>1</sup> I know of no evidence that the king issued hybrid letters of this type under the privy seal.<sup>2</sup>

More ordinary letters patent were issued under the privy seal without witnesses; these were sometimes in Latin, sometimes in French, and, as in the royal chancery, might have a general or a particular address. The general address was often in the normal form, *Omnibus ad quos presentes littere pervenerint*, sometimes *Universis et singulis presentes litteras inspecturis*, or *A touz ceulx qui ces noz lettres verront et orront*. The prince's letters patent included the clause *in cuius rei testimonium has litteras nostras fieri fecimus patentes*. This was never followed, as far as I know, by *teste me ipso* as in the royal chancery,<sup>3</sup> but by the phrase "given under our seal," or "given under our privy seal,"<sup>4</sup> and then the date. The text of the letter followed the royal model. Occasional variations of the regular charter and letter patent form are found in letters beginning *Sciant presentes et futuri quod*, etc., *Pateat universis per presentes quod*, etc., or *Sachez tous*, etc.

The form of the prince's letters close was influenced both by the royal chancery and the king's privy seal department. Thus we find letters close, normally in French, rarely in Latin, in regular chancery form, except that the phrase *teste me ipso* does not appear, and the letter is usually "given under our privy seal." Warrants to the royal chancery, however, like similar

<sup>1</sup> Edward of Carnarvon, as prince of Wales, issued letters patent under his great seal, with the silken strings, pendent seal, etc., which marked a charter in outward appearance, and also the list of witnesses which characterised the charter in internal form. But the list of witnesses was preceded by the ordinary attestation of letters patent, "In cuius rei testimonium has litteras nostras fieri fecimus patentes"; *Anc. D.* 453.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Tait has pointed out to me that hybrid charters under the great seal existed in the fifteenth century. *E.g.* a charter of 1439 ends like a letter patent, but with the addition of witnesses (*C. Ch. R.* vi. p. 273; cf. Dr. Tait's review of this calendar, *History*, xiii. p. 150).

<sup>3</sup> For the use of the formula "teste me ipso" in the chancery of Aquitaine see, however, below, p. 414.

<sup>4</sup> A variant was to include the reference to the seal in the first part of the attestation, "En tesmoignance de quele chose nous avons faitz cestez nos lettres patentes seallez de nostre seal"; or "de notre prive seal."

warrants under the king's privy seal, that is to say, like "letters of privy seal,"<sup>1</sup> were sometimes headed by such a phrase as *de par le prince de Galles*, and then begin with a modified form of address,<sup>2</sup> followed by the injunctive clause introduced by such a phrase as *porce que*. In such instruments the year of the date was not given. Another form of chancery warrant with the address and *par le Prince de Galles* on one side of the document, and the details of the required chancery letter on the other, was also common. Such warrants do not exactly fit into either of the categories of bills or letters which characterised many of the king's warrants of privy seal.<sup>3</sup> These warrants of the prince were also usually undated; in such cases the prince's seal was applied on the face, in the centre between the two written portions of the letter. Generally, however, the prince's officials would seem to have followed the practice of the king's privy seal department in the use of writs, letters and bills as chancery warrants, though there is little evidence of clear-cut distinctions between the categories, and the forms were more variable.

Original instruments under the prince's privy seals very occasionally contain notes of the warrant which authorised them;<sup>4</sup> occasionally, too, they include the name of the clerk who wrote the letter or was responsible for its form,<sup>5</sup> unlike such instruments under the king's privy seal at this time.<sup>6</sup> But neither practice would seem to have been regularly and systematically carried out, though the registers of the prince's letters testify to the extensive use of warrants in his secretarial department.

It is not possible to notice in detail here the formulas employed in the chancery of Aquitaine. On the whole they seem to follow the customary wording of the English chancery. It is probably right to assume that all letters issued in Gascony which do not mention the seal which authorised them were the products of the

<sup>1</sup> For these "anomalous warrants" of the king see Maxwell-Lyte, pp. 56-59. Also above, p. 115; and Déprez, p. 51.

<sup>2</sup> Such as "Reverent piere en Dieu." There was no superscription in such letters.

<sup>3</sup> See Maxwell-Lyte, pp. 51-59, also above, pp. 113-115.

<sup>4</sup> E.g. "de par homout, Ich dene" (*Chanc. Misc.* 34/1/2), which is said to be written in the prince's own hand (*P.R.O. Cat. Mus.*, 1925, p. 35). See above, pp. 371-372.

<sup>5</sup> E.g. Fordham (*Chanc. Misc.* 34/1/2).

<sup>6</sup> Maxwell-Lyte, p. 34. For exceptions, however, see above, p. 114, n. 1.

Gascon chancery,<sup>1</sup> though proof in all examples would be difficult as the majority are only known to us from printed descriptions<sup>2</sup> or from transcripts.<sup>3</sup> In a number of cases, however, there is no difficulty, for the great seal or great seal pendent is specifically mentioned in the course of the letter,<sup>4</sup> a practice which is not normally found in England; more rarely "the seal" is mentioned.<sup>5</sup> I have seen no formal charters with witnesses, under the great seal of Aquitaine, but the letters patent are similar to those in England;<sup>6</sup> they are addressed in the same way and end with the same phrase of attestation.<sup>7</sup> Sometimes the clause of ratification also includes the chancery formula *teste me ipso*,<sup>8</sup> but this is not always used.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, with letters close, *teste me ipso* is sometimes included<sup>10</sup> and sometimes not.<sup>11</sup> I have never found it used, however, in either letters patent or close after May 1364. About the same date the superscription of the prince's letters ceases to refer to Edward III. as king of England "by the grace of God";<sup>12</sup> possibly both changes may be due to an alteration in the staff of the chancery. French and Latin are both used apparently indiscriminately in all types of letters, and the letters were, I think, always written on parchment. Occasionally the warrant for the letter is noted, as for example on a large and formal instrument in which the notes *per canc'* and *per guarantum*

<sup>1</sup> Letters of both king and prince normally mention the privy seal when it is used.

<sup>2</sup> Sometimes in such cases the great seal survives and puts the question beyond dispute (*e.g. Arch. hist. Gir.* vi. p. 371); in others silken strings only survive (*e.g. ib.* xii. p. 5); in others the printed description gives few details as to the seal itself, *e.g.* "sealed in white wax on a simple queue" (*ib.* xxxiv. p. 193—this refers almost certainly to the great seal), or, more irritating still, "sealed on a simple queue" (*ib.* p. 190).

<sup>3</sup> The wording of a *vidimus* often indicates that the great seal was used; *e.g.* "We have seen letters of . . . Edward . . . written on parchment and sealed with his great seal pendent with white wax . . . as follows" (*e.g. Arch. hist. Gir.* xxxiv. p. 190).

<sup>4</sup> An example of a reference to "the great seal pendent" is found, *e.g.*, in *Gasc.* 94, m. 20.

<sup>5</sup> *E.g. ib.* 82, m. 10.

<sup>6</sup> *E.g. Arch. hist. Gir.* xxxv. p. 165; *Chanc. Misc.* 25/5, no. 10.

<sup>7</sup> "In cuius rei testimonium has litteras nostras fieri fecimus patentes."

<sup>8</sup> This appears on a letter patent, for example, in *Arch. hist. Gir.* xxxv. p. 165, or *Chanc. Misc.* 25/5, no. 10.

<sup>9</sup> *E.g. Rouquette*, appendix iv. (Sept. 27, 1363).

<sup>10</sup> *E.g. Arch. hist. Gir.* xxxiv. p. 190 (July 14, 1364).

<sup>11</sup> *E.g. ib.* xxxv. p. 311.

<sup>12</sup> See above, p. 408, n. 5.



*de privato sigillo* are both recorded above the *répli*.<sup>1</sup> The name of the clerk who wrote the letters is also sometimes noted.<sup>2</sup>

The diplomatic of the prince's secret seal instruments seems also on the whole to have been modelled upon the diplomatic of the king's similar documents, though I have never seen a writ under the prince's secret seal. They had usually no protocol, but began by an injunctive clause, *porce que*,<sup>3</sup> etc.; they were headed by the phrase *depar le prince des Galles*, . . . etc., and ended with the phrase *Don souz notre secret seal*, followed by the place and date (day of month only). Most of the surviving original instruments of secret seal are warrants for the issue of mandates under the privy seal, and are addressed to the keeper of the privy seal (though this is not stated). Thus they have the stereotyped characteristics but informal nature of letters and bills of privy seal addressed to the royal chancery, or letters and bills of secret seal and signet.<sup>4</sup> Certain personal letters sent to the prince's mother<sup>5</sup> or wife,<sup>6</sup> for example, do not mention the seal under which they are issued—which was probably the secret seal or signet. These are "letters" in the technical sense.<sup>7</sup> An account of the battle of Poitiers was sent to the city of London by letter under the prince's secret seal.<sup>8</sup>

It is probable that the signet of Edward III. was merely another name for his later secret seals, and the same is perhaps true of the Black Prince's signet. At any rate, no clear distinction can be made between signet and secret seal, perhaps partly

<sup>1</sup> *E.A.* 178/19.

<sup>2</sup> The names are "De Frodsham" (*ib.*, Oct. 8, 1370, also *Chanc. Misc.* 5/12, Mar. 11, 1371), London (*Chanc. Misc.* 25/5, no. 10, 1363—month illegible—*Arch. hist. Gir.* vi. p. 370, July 28, 1365), Firgout (Rouquette, appendix xi., Feb. 28, 1366). In other cases known to us only from *vidimus*, notarial inspections, or certificates of publication, the names following the letter are presumably those of the clerks who collated the transcript with the original. The dates are therefore the dates of the certificate of publication or copy, etc. The names are J. de Ponte (*ib.* no. 11 (illegible date); *A.C.* xlii. 31, Aug. 29, 1365); Populus (*Chanc. Misc.* 25/5, no. 15, Nov. 12, 1371); Raffin (*Arch. hist. Gir.* xxxiv. p. 190); Aymeri, definitely stated to have made the collation, though "G. de S. scripsit" (*Arch. hist. Gir.* xii. p. 15); and Bonelli, who also made a collation (Rouquette, appendix xvi.).

<sup>3</sup> Sometimes the text began directly, e.g. "Nous vous enuoions," etc. (*A.C.* liv. 59).

<sup>4</sup> Above, pp. 172-173.

<sup>5</sup> E.g. *A.C.* liv. 29.

<sup>6</sup> *Revue Historique*, cxxxvi. p. 37, where M. Déprez prints a letter to the princess, giving an account of the battle of Nájera. Cf. *E.H.R.* xli. 418, July 1926.

<sup>7</sup> Maxwell-Lyte, p. 109.

<sup>8</sup> Printed in Delachenal, ii. p. 382.

through lack of evidence. The two original signet letters which survive seem to be similar in form to those under the secret seal, except that they chance to have a modified form of address.<sup>1</sup> Several registered signet warrants for the issue of letters under the privy seal are in the same form.<sup>2</sup> In one case the note of warrant in the register is "by warrant under the secret seal," and then there follows a letter of warrant "given under the signet."<sup>3</sup> This suggests that the two seals were identical.

Turning from the formulae in which the prince's letters were normally drawn up to the way in which the letters were sealed, we find the same general imitation of royal practice. Seals pendent of the Black Prince survive very infrequently on letters issued by him in England, though they are fairly common on letters issued in Gascony. Two examples, however, of the former class survive, where the seals are suspended by *lacs de soie* to formal letters patent; in each case the laces are fastened and the document folded in the same way as in the royal chancery.<sup>4</sup> The laces are green in one case, green and blue in the other; each privy seal has a single face and is mounted in a guard of dark coloured wax. Occasional privy seals also survive on a double<sup>5</sup> and simple queue.<sup>6</sup>

On one exceptional occasion at least, the prince's privy seal was impressed in green wax and used as a counterseal, in the fashion

<sup>1</sup> "Reverent piere en dieu." On the dorse they are addressed to the chancellor of England. But such a form was normal in the secret seal letters of Edward III., and was probably also common in the secret seal letters of the Black Prince, though none happen to have survived.

<sup>2</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 279, 200d, 202d.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* f. 202d.

<sup>4</sup> One is a letter under the prince's privy seal in use in 1359 (*Anc. D.*, B. 9036). For the identification of this seal see below, p. 424. The other is given under the prince's privy seal, "used before we were prince of Aquitaine," and is a formal letter patent reciting the grant of the principality of Aquitaine to him; *Dipl. Docs. Exch.* 1106 and 1107, duplicates.

<sup>5</sup> *E.g.* on an indenture in which the prince granted certain fishing rights to the abbot and convent of Tavistock (Oct. 1, 1354). This is now in the possession of the duke of Bedford, and through the good offices of Miss G. Scott Thomson I have been able to inspect a photograph of the original. The indenture states that the prince's privy seal had been placed on the portion destined to remain with the abbey, and the seal still exists in an excellent state of preservation (see below, p. 422). The indenture is registered in *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 280, f. 47.

<sup>6</sup> *E.g.* on a letter patent to the mayor and citizens of Chester (see above, p. 405, n. 4), 1351, *City of Chester Muniments*, and Rupert Morris, *Chester*, p. 495; and on a note of various bequests to the cathedral of Canterbury (*Exch. Misc.* 5/39), which is not written in any of the ordinary letter forms.

of royal privy seals of the past.<sup>1</sup> The obverse was the prince's exchequer seal of Chester, and the two-faced seal was suspended by yellow silken strings to an exemplification of a grant to the abbey of Darnhall—more usually known as Vale Royal. Such a formal document in Cheshire would normally have been issued under the Chester exchequer seal alone, and green wax would have been used.<sup>2</sup> This particular exemplification was issued while the prince was himself present at Chester, and ends in a manner unusual alike in documents emanating from the Cheshire chancery and in documents issued under his privy seal, *datum per manum nostram*. It is the only occasion on which I have found a double-faced seal used by the Black Prince before 1362.

The seal used by the prince as his father's lieutenant in Gascony between 1355 and 1357 was normally placed on a simple<sup>3</sup> or a double queue,<sup>4</sup> and never on the dorse, as far as I know, until after his return to England. It, too, was a single-faced seal, and was frequently described as "our seal pendent," and "our seal," occasionally as "our privy seal,"<sup>5</sup> even as "our great seal."<sup>6</sup> It was apparently used in much the same way as the great seal of England: for example, letters patent were similarly sealed on a simple queue,<sup>7</sup> and even letters addressed to an individual might be sealed patentwise.<sup>8</sup> Privy seals in use abroad also occasionally survive on a simple queue,<sup>9</sup> and may be known as the "privy seal pendent";<sup>10</sup> more often privy seal instruments show no sign of how they were sealed except for the survival of slits in the parchment, which prove that they

<sup>1</sup> *Anc. D. B.* 10546 (Sept. 10, 1353). Mr. V. H. Galbraith kindly drew my attention to this seal. See Plate V. below.

<sup>2</sup> Compare, for example, *Anc. D. A.A.* 444, also a grant to Vale Royal.

<sup>3</sup> *E.g. E.A.* 169/2, no. 292.

<sup>4</sup> *E.g. Dipl. Docs. Exch.* 1632, printed in *Facsimiles of National MSS.* i. no. xxviii., and *Foedera*, III. i. 346; also see *E.A.* 171/5, etc.

<sup>5</sup> *Bull. J.R.L.* vii. *loc. cit.* p. 116.

<sup>6</sup> Viz. in a *vidimus* by the keeper of the seal and counterseal for contracts in Bordeaux (Feb. 8, 1363) of letters of the prince of Jan. 1, 1357, sealed with "his great seal in red wax pendent" (*E.A.* 176/20, no. 33). The actual letter refers to "our seal pendent."

<sup>7</sup> *E.A.* 169/2, part 3, no. 27.

<sup>8</sup> *Ib.* 171/4, file 1, part 3, no. 27; 171/5 *passim*.

<sup>9</sup> *Ad. Ch.* 11308, printed in *Palaeographical Society Facsimiles*, ii. No. 140 (see below, p. 425); also *E.A.* 176/20, no. 37, where a fragment of torn queue survives.

<sup>10</sup> *Arch. hist. Gir.* vi. 370 (Aug. 8, 1365).



were closed ;<sup>1</sup> once only can I trace the faint impression of a seal applied on the dorse.<sup>2</sup>

The great seal of Gascony was of course always pendent, and is found attached by silken strings<sup>3</sup> or by a simple queue.<sup>4</sup> The strings which survive are green or red, and the great seal seems usually, but not always,<sup>5</sup> to have been impressed in green wax on formal documents sealed in this way. A simple queue might be used for the sealing of letters close.<sup>6</sup> In the prince's chancery of Gascony, as probably also in his personal secretariats, and in the English chancery and king's privy seal departments, a letter addressed to an individual or group of individuals was by no means always a letter which was closed. .

The earlier method of sealing the prince's closed instruments of privy seal differed from the later. In his earliest surviving original letters, which date from 1338, and in those of the next fifteen years or so,<sup>7</sup> the seal was applied on the centre of the dorse at a point about three-quarter way down. A narrow tag, usually cut from the bottom of the letter, but not severed from the document as a whole, and broadening at the right-hand end into a label of address, was wrapped round the folded parchment and sealed on the dorse.<sup>8</sup> These letters close seem usually to have been opened by cutting the two narrow strips of parchment belonging to the tag and label, just below the seal. The seal, uninjured, was then often protected by means of a small piece of parchment, either round or square, stitched over it with white or blue thread.<sup>9</sup> This piece of parchment was quite often formed of the label of address itself.<sup>10</sup> This means

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.* *A.C.* xl. 164, 186 ; *Chanc. Misc.* 34/1/2.

<sup>2</sup> *E.A.* 176/20, no. 26.

<sup>3</sup> *E.g.* *E.A.* 178/19 ; *Exch. T.R. Scotch Documents*, Box 26 (originals).

<sup>4</sup> *E.g.* *Chanc. Misc.* 25/5/12. I know of no example on a double queue, but very few originals survive in England, and contemporary manuscripts usually refer to the prince's seal pendent without further particularity.

<sup>5</sup> Examples of white wax are also found. See above, p. 406, ns. 3 and 5.

<sup>6</sup> See above, p. 417, n. 8.

<sup>7</sup> See below, p. 419.

<sup>8</sup> Compare the elaborate description given above, pp. 117-118.

<sup>9</sup> Small holes were sometimes cut, often in a diamond shape, in this covering, presumably so that the seal could be inspected by the distrustful.

<sup>10</sup> A file of the prince's letters to the justice of Chester, surviving in *Chester* 1/1, illustrates these points most admirably (especially, *e.g.*, nos. 18, 24, 25 ; see below, p. 421, n. 6). The method of folding is also quite clear from these writs. Unfortunately, once the parchment cover is removed for inspection and the seal repaired, it is hardly possible to replace it as it was before. Other examples of

of preservation of the seal, which would seem to have been used extensively by Cheshire recipients, was also known to the officials of the royal chancery and privy seal department; <sup>1</sup> it serves the modern inquirer well, for considerable fragments of wax may still survive. This method of sealing was used by Edward III. also for writs of privy seal in the first part of his reign.<sup>2</sup>

The second method by which the Black Prince's privy seal letters were sealed was also used by Edward III. in his privy seal department.<sup>3</sup> The letter was folded usually in one horizontal and two vertical folds, and a slit was then cut through, with the result that six slits appeared when the letter was unfolded. In the case of short letters requiring no horizontal fold, only three slits would appear. The tag was then put through the slit and sealed on the dorse. By this method the impression of the seal on the dorse appears at the right-hand end of the document, and sometimes only a portion of the arc survives.<sup>4</sup> Occasionally a small piece of parchment is sewn over the seal. There is no evidence in such letters of the prince as to how they were addressed—probably on the label as in the king's privy seal department,<sup>5</sup> though no such labels have survived. The seal seems to have been broken to open the letter; the tag itself rarely survives, though the stump may remain. This system was probably not normally used in the prince's chancery till after he acquired his two-inch privy seal, *circa* 1357,<sup>6</sup> but was always used after that date.

We have already seen that the prince's privy seal was some-

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such sealing, but without the protective cover, survive in *C.W.* 1532, etc., though here a faint mark of wax is all that remains of the seal. This is broken by a white strip in a V shape where the tags once presumably were. Compare many examples in *Ancient Correspondence* (e.g. *A.C.* xxxix. 63 and *A.C.* liv. pp. 17-18, detached labels of address only).

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 118.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 117.

<sup>3</sup> See Maxwell-Lyte, p. 49, where 1345 is given as the year of the change from the one method to the other. Also see above, pp. 118-120.

<sup>4</sup> See, e.g., *C.W.* 1771, no. 7.

<sup>5</sup> See above, pp. 115, 117.

<sup>6</sup> See below, pp. 422-424. I have found slits on only one writ of the prince before that date. This is a petition sent to the king by the prince on behalf of Richard Venables of Chester, accused of felony outside the county of Chester, for an offence within it, against the ancient privileges of the palatinate (*Anc. Pet.* 12163). There is no trace of the seal on the petition, which may have been accompanied by a covering note now detached and lost. A chancery warrant, in answer, under the secret seal also survives (*C.W.* 1332/35). Both are dated 1347 by the P.R.O. A pardon was issued in favour of Richard Venables by the prince on Feb. 8, 1348 (*Recog.* 32, m. 1d).

times, notably in bills of warrant to the chancery, impressed *plaqué* on the face of the document.<sup>1</sup> His three differently sized privy seals are all found applied in this way during the period they were in use ; in one instance the parchment below the seal was marked with six slits.<sup>2</sup> In such cases the document was not closed, and the seal was merely a mark of authentication. Similar impressed seals were occasionally used in letters other than chancery warrants.<sup>3</sup> Seals impressed on the face of the document were becoming more common in the secretarial departments of the king of England throughout the fourteenth century, perhaps partly through imitation of French procedure, and the increasing use of paper in both countries,<sup>4</sup> partly through the evolution of the bill as a diplomatic form. The Black Prince's use of such seals may have been directly influenced by English royal custom or by French practice.

Instruments under the secret seal and signet seem always to have been sealed in a manner very similar to the later privy seal method, though it was usual to have eight instead of six slits. The impression left by the wax is often barely distinguishable, but can sometimes be detected by holding the letter up to the light and searching round the bottom right-hand slit on the dorse.<sup>5</sup> The seal was always placed over this slit where the tag came through. The two surviving signet letters are in so poor a condition that it is impossible to say with certainty that they were sealed in a similar way, though it seems probable.

It may be convenient to repeat here a list of the prince's

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 413.

<sup>2</sup> *C.W.* 1746/37.

<sup>3</sup> As in the case of the paper Jodrell deed, which I have described, with a photograph, elsewhere (*Bull. J.R.L.* vii. p. 106). This is a licence (Dec. 16, 1355) for an archer to leave the army in Gascony and go to England. Though the method of sealing this document is more common in the Black Prince's chancery than I once supposed, it is, nevertheless, exceptional. Another example survives on a notification from the prince of Aquitaine as to the length of service abroad of a certain John Tilly, recently deceased (*Chanc. Misc.* 2/41/6). Unlike William Jodrell's pass, this notification is written on parchment and is undated. I have not succeeded in dating it. The seal is described in the letter as "our seal," and was probably a privy seal. Both these documents were, of course, patent ; both were issued in France, where the seal *plaqué* was more usual than in England.

<sup>4</sup> R. L. Poole, "Seals and Documents" (from the *Proceedings of the British Academy*, vol. ix. p. 20).

<sup>5</sup> In order to strengthen the weak spots in these letters, the repairers at the Public Record Office have pasted thin paper over the portion of the letter which has been slit. This has the unfortunate result of obscuring the faint trace of wax where the seal once was.



seals.<sup>1</sup> In all he must have had at least eight privy seals throughout his life.<sup>2</sup> His earliest privy seal, as earl of Chester, in use certainly by March 1334,<sup>3</sup> if not before, does not, apparently, survive. Six of his privy seals, however, can be described, and the faint impression of another remains. The first of these was used



by him as duke of Cornwall and earl of Chester,<sup>4</sup> but continued in use for some years after he became prince of Wales.<sup>5</sup> It depicted an upright shield of arms of England, probably differenced by a label of three points, and with a small lion rampant above the shield, surrounded by a Gothic panel of eight cusps with ball flower ornaments (see drawing above).<sup>6</sup> It measured 35 mms. in diameter,<sup>7</sup> and the legend can be reconstructed from several

<sup>1</sup> I have already described these seals in *Bull. J.R.L.* vii., modified this description in *Essays presented to T. F. Tout*, p. 325, n. 3, and subsequently slightly added to the information, and therefore a summary seems called for.

<sup>2</sup> Viz. the seal used before 1337; the seal of the duke of Cornwall (see pp. 421-422); the seal of the prince of Wales (p. 422); the large seal of the prince of Wales which was first used in Gascony and subsequently in England (pp. 423-424); the large seal used in England certainly in 1362 and probably from 1360 to 1369 (p. 425); the large seal used in England after 1369 (pp. 426-427); and the two seals used abroad in 1360 (p. 425) and after 1362 (p. 426).

<sup>3</sup> *Cheshire Plea Roll*, 45, m. 19.

<sup>4</sup> The first impression I have found (of which no actual wax survives) is on a letter of Feb. 11, 1338 (*A.C.* xxxix. 63).

<sup>5</sup> It was certainly in use in England as late as February 1346 (*M.A.* 1241/12). This is some nine months longer than I have previously stated. See also below, p. 422, n. 2. A somewhat similar seal was in use in March 1347 (*Cheshire Sheaf*, xvii. 4155, no. 5; but the brief description there given might refer to either the prince's privy seal or his exchequer seal of Chester).

<sup>6</sup> Of this seal numerous small fragments alone survive (*Chester* 1/1, part 1), and no photographic representation proved possible. Dr. Broome overcame this obstacle by achieving the difficult—I should have thought impossible—task of reconstructing this complete picture, and I am exceedingly grateful to her for the care and trouble she has taken. The seal is not described in *Birch, Seals in the British Museum*, nor in any other account of the Black Prince's seals as far as I know.

<sup>7</sup> Impressions vary from 34 to 36 mms.

fragmentary seals.<sup>1</sup> It probably continued to be used in England throughout 1346 and 1347, while the prince was abroad.<sup>2</sup>

The second surviving privy seal was similar in design, with a label of three points and a lion over the shield, but showed an upright shield of arms of France and England quarterly. There are two oak branches on either side of the shield.<sup>3</sup> Impressions of the seal measure 38-40 mms., and again the legend may be reconstructed.<sup>4</sup> This seal was certainly used by the prince abroad on the Crécy-Calais campaign,<sup>5</sup> and continued to be used after his return to England, certainly till 1354,<sup>6</sup> and probably for longer.<sup>7</sup> In 1355 the prince went to Gascony, taking with him

<sup>1</sup> The legend is preceded by a star, and runs : s' EDWARDI PRIMOGENITI REGIS ANGL' DUCIS CORNUBIE ET COMITIS CESTRIE.

<sup>2</sup> It is found in use in England in Feb. 1346 (see above, p. 421, n. 5), and the prince left for France in July. It is clear that different seals continued in use in England and abroad (see above, p. 374). Unfortunately, I know of no original instruments sealed in England during this period, though various undated chancery warrants for protections were probably issued between Feb. 1346 and the prince's departure (e.g. *C.W.* 1746/29), and possibly after his departure. I have not succeeded in dating these by the actual protections on the French roll. Wrottesley's *Crécy and Calais* is not as helpful as it should be, as he does not always make a note of warrants : e.g. the protections he gives (*ib.* p. 93) were actually warranted "by testimony of the said prince" (*Treaty Roll*, 22, m. 8). A few of the names there given are mentioned in *C.W.* 1746/29, but as there are discrepancies in the two lists, this warrant cannot be certainly dated from these protections.

<sup>3</sup> It is described in Birch, *Seals in B.M.* no. 5558, where the shield is wrongly described as *couché* ; also *Bull. J.R.L.* vii. *loc. cit.* Also *Journal of the Architectural, Archaeological and Historic Society of Chester*, new series, xviii. 42, and *Bull. J.R.L.* ix. p. 185, in the course of Dr. B. Wilkinson's account of "A letter to Louis de Male, Count of Flanders." For a photograph see below, Plate V. 2.

<sup>4</sup> The extended legend runs : s' EDWARDI PRIMOGENITI REGIS ANGLIE ET FRANCIE PRINCIPIS WALLIE DUCIS CORNUBIE ET COMITIS CESTRIE.

<sup>5</sup> *Bull. J.R.L.* ix. *loc. cit.*, viz. Mar. 13, 1347 (*Phillipps Charters*, 23).

<sup>6</sup> It is found on an indenture of Oct. 1, 1354, in favour of the abbey and convent of Tavistock. See above, p. 416, n. 5.

<sup>7</sup> The seals in use in 1353 and 1358 were different (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 137). For the seal used after 1357 see below, pp. 423-424. If various undated chancery warrants could be dated it might be possible to establish the time of usage of all these early privy seals with more certainty. The letters issued in consequence of the warrants do not appear in the calendars of chancery rolls, but could probably be traced in the Gascon or French rolls. For instance, I suspect that an undated chancery warrant (*C.W.* 1746/45) which the Record Office assigns to the prince of Wales, was not really issued by him. It is a warrant for a protection for John Vere, earl of Oxford, going to Gascony in the company of the prince of Wales. The impression of the seal *plaqué* on the face is hard to measure, but would seem to be slightly smaller than the prince's seal as prince of Wales which he was probably still using. A faint trace of a shield of arms possibly also survives, but if so, it is a differently shaped shield from that on the prince's seal. The impression is too indistinct to afford any certain proof. More

a new seal for use there,<sup>1</sup> while another seal remained at Westminster in the custody of his officials; it is reasonable to suppose, especially in view of the possible action taken in similar circumstances in 1346,<sup>2</sup> that the old seal continued to be used in England until his return from abroad.<sup>3</sup>

In the same way, it seems reasonable to suppose that the prince brought home with him the seal he had been using abroad, and continued to use it in England. Some evidence also supports this view. A larger seal, of the same dimensions as the seal known to have been used in Gascony,<sup>4</sup> is found in use in England, probably in 1357,<sup>5</sup> certainly in 1358.<sup>6</sup> A formal letter, with all the

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convincing is the actual protection issued in consequence of the warrant, dated June 19, 1355 (*Gasc.* 67, m. 10), which is warranted "per ipsum regem." Thus *C.W.* 1746/45 may be dated 1355, probably June. The seal on the warrant must remain unidentified; it does not seem to be the king's signet in use in 1355 (see above, p. 175). Another undated warrant for a protection for Maurice, son of Thomas Berkeley, and others, has the faint impression of a seal of 38 mms. (*C.W.* 1771/9), and may perhaps be dated June 28, 1355. A protection for him was certainly issued on that date (*Gasc.* 67, m. 8), and was probably given by testimony of the prince of Wales, but I cannot trace the other names also included in the warrant, so that the identification is not certain.

<sup>1</sup> *Bull. J.R.L.* vii. *loc. cit.*, especially pp. 114-116.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 422.

<sup>3</sup> An undated chancery warrant (Oct. 25) in favour of John Trayly has the faint impression of a seal at the right hand of the dorse, which is hard to measure (*C.W.* 1771, no. 5). It is, I think, probably the impression of the larger seal of the prince's in use after 1357, though, from the faint mark surviving, it is not certain. The mandate in pursuance of the warrant, to the treasurer and barons of the exchequer, was, however, dated Oct. 25, 1357 (*M.R.*, *K.R.* 134), so the warrant was certainly sealed after the prince's return. I know of none of these warrants which can be certainly assigned to the period of the prince's absence, though close scrutiny of the warrants in comparison with the Gascon roll might furnish some certain dates.

<sup>4</sup> See below, p. 424.

<sup>5</sup> See n. 3 above, and *C.W.* 1771/2. This letter is dated July 9 (no year stated). It was almost certainly issued in 1357, when the prince is known to have been staying at the bishop of Ely's house in Holborn (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278), whence it was issued. He had reached England in May. Letters of pardon, in consequence of this warrant, in favour of John Mantel of Evyngton, were issued by the chancery on July 9, 1357, at the prince's request (*C.P.R.*, 1354-58, p. 560). The impression of the seal is barely visible, though I think it exists (c. 52 mms. diameter); it is partly obscured through modern repairs and mounting, but the paper of the warrant is so torn and fragile that it could hardly survive the withdrawal of its mount for closer inspection. The method of folding and sealing, with slits, etc., is that in normal use after 1358 (see above, p. 419). A similar paper letter, of which half only survives, was also issued from Ely Place on July 4, 1357. This is dated, but on it I can find no sign of the seal, which may possibly be obscured by the mount (*C.W.* 1771/6).

<sup>6</sup> *C.W.* 1771/7. This is a warrant to the chancery given under the prince's privy seal at Poplar, Aug. 1 (no year stated), for a pardon in favour of



trappings of a charter,<sup>1</sup> issued at Northbourne by Sandwich on October 24, 1359, on the eve of the prince's departure for France,<sup>2</sup> bears a seal of the same size (viz. 52 mms.), which is certainly the same seal as that used in Gascony between 1355 and 1357. Thus the evidence surely suggests that it had been used in England from 1357 on. In 1359 special arrangements for sealing during absence had again to be made. If earlier precedents were followed, the seal used in England would follow the prince to the port of embarkation and then return to Westminster,<sup>3</sup> and his letters abroad would be issued under a new seal. Such a seal is found in use abroad in 1360.<sup>4</sup>

I have already described elsewhere in some detail the seal which was used in Gascony between 1355 and 1357,<sup>5</sup> and which I now think was used in England from 1357 until some time in 1360. Its main feature was a shield *couché* of the arms of England and France quarterly, with a label of three points. Above is "a helmet and chapeau turned up ermine,"<sup>6</sup> surmounted by a lion of England with a label of three points round his neck. A carved Gothic panel surrounds the main design, from which flowers and leaves branch inwards. The shield of arms lies across the marginal edge of the bottom and thus divides the legend.<sup>7</sup> Impressions of the seal vary from 50 mms. to 52 mms. in diameter. It was brought into use in England shortly after Edward III. had acquired a new privy seal of similar dimensions.<sup>8</sup> Its use was probably discontinued in 1360, when Edward III. renounced his claim to the French throne.

This seal was apparently superseded by a seal of the same

William Caldewell. The arc of a seal of c. 52 mms. survives, and also the stump of a tag and six slits. Such a pardon was issued on Aug. 1, 1358, "by testimony of the prince of Wales" (*C.P.R.*, 1358-61, p. 89). The prince was certainly at Poplar on Aug. 1, 1358 (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278).

<sup>1</sup> *Anc. D. B.* 9036. See above, p. 411.

<sup>2</sup> The prince stayed at Northbourne certainly from Sept. 18 (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 179) until Oct. 28 (*ib.* f. 186d).

<sup>3</sup> Letters in the prince's registers are dated from Northbourne until his departure; from Westminster afterwards.

<sup>4</sup> See below, p. 425.

<sup>5</sup> *Bull. J.R.L.* vii. *loc. cit.*

<sup>6</sup> See Birch, *Seals in B.M.* ii. no. 5557. Probably this same seal is described (inadequately) in *Archaeologia*, xxxi. p. 361 (seal no. 6). See below, Plate VI. (1).

<sup>7</sup> The legend runs: s' EDWARDI PRIMOGENITI REGIS ANGLIE ET FRANCIE PRINCIPIS WALLIE DUCIS CORNUBIE ET COMITIS CESTRIE.

<sup>8</sup> See above, p. 138. Also Maxwell-Lyte, p. 43.

size and same general design but with a changed legend. The branching flowers and leaves, however, were replaced by an ostrich feather on either side of the central shield, helmet, etc.<sup>1</sup> On July 19, 1362, this seal was described in a letter of the prince for transmission to Gascony as "our seal used before we were prince of Aquitaine."<sup>2</sup> It was probably still in use in August 1362.<sup>3</sup> In the absence of further evidence, indeed, I suggest it continued to be used till 1369, when Edward III. again resumed the French title.<sup>4</sup> The title of prince of Aquitaine does not appear in the legend of any surviving seal used in England.

The seal used abroad in 1360,<sup>5</sup> of which mention has already been made, measured only c. 41 mms. I know no example of its use in England. Its main feature is a shield of arms of France and England quarterly, "upheld by a demi-angel, draped and with expanded wings, under a carved canopy of three arches, pinnacled and crocheted."<sup>6</sup> On either side of the main design is an ostrich feather. It was clearly a privy seal.<sup>7</sup> This seal was possibly not paid for in December 1360, and must have been made shortly before.<sup>8</sup> There is no evidence whether it was used

<sup>1</sup> I have also described this seal with a photograph in *Bull. J.R.L.* vii. *loc. cit.* (where it is called seal B). See also Birch, *Seals in B.M.* ii. nos. 5552 and 5553, where the plaster cast is dated 1360. If it was made in consequence of the treaty of Calais of Oct. 1360, it was taken into use remarkably soon, if this date be correct. The legend is: s' EDWARDI PRIMOGENITI REGIS ANGLIE PRINCIPIS WALLIE DUCIS CORNUBIE ET COMITIS CESTRIE. There is a drawing of it in *Archaeologia*, xxxi. p. 362; see also Plate VI. (2) below.

<sup>2</sup> *Dipl. Docs. Exch.* 1106 and 1107.

<sup>3</sup> Douët d'Arcq, iii. no. 10133. The description of this seal is hardly complete enough for certain identification.

<sup>4</sup> Protections for persons going abroad to serve the prince of Aquitaine in Gascony were certainly warranted after 1362 by letters under the seal of Peter Lacy (see above, p. 402, n. 5). They were not necessarily given under the prince's own seal. I have found no letters with clear indication of the seal used in England between 1362 and 1369; *Ad. Ch.* 43258, July 4, 1364 (wrongly dated in *Index to Charters and Rolls in B.M.* as 1374), shows no trace of the seal, and in *A.C.* xl. 72 (Feb. 5, 1363) the faint impression is too indistinct to measure.

<sup>5</sup> See above, p. 424. It appears on an undertaking to observe the terms of the peace of Calais, surviving in duplicate (*Ad. Ch.* 11308; Douët d'Arcq, iii. 10132), and dated Oct. 26, 1360 (altered from Oct. 31).

<sup>6</sup> Birch, *Seals in B.M.* no. 5555. See also *Palaeographical Society Facsimiles*, ii. no. 142; Douët d'Arcq, iii. 10132. For photograph see Plate VII.

<sup>7</sup> Unhappily, I have previously suggested that it might be a secret seal (*Bull. J.R.L.* vii. p. 111).

<sup>8</sup> See *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, 204d. A letter of Dec. 1360 refers to the prince's debt "pur le nouel seal oue la cheyne qe nous lui feismes faire ore dirrain a notre oeps . . ." The receiver-general was ordered to pay the debt. A

again at any period of the prince's life. The only surviving impressions of the privy seal used in Gascony after 1362 are of a larger seal, 54-56 mms., and we know nothing of its design.<sup>1</sup>

The remaining privy seal known to have been used in England is of the same size and design as the seal used in 1362,<sup>2</sup> but there are minor differences, notably in the position of the shield *couché*, which lies clear of the marginal edge and thus leaves more room for the legend.<sup>3</sup> As this legend describes the prince as son of the king of England and France, the seal perhaps came into use after 1369, on Edward III.'s renewal of his claim to the French throne. It is unfortunate that no actual complete seal survives; it is known to us only by a cast at the British Museum, which is dated 1350, but on what evidence I cannot discover. I am inclined to suspect this date, for another seal was probably in use in 1350.<sup>4</sup> A fragment of a later privy seal, possibly of 1376, also survives, and though not enough of it remains for certain identification, it is probably the same seal as the British Museum cast.<sup>5</sup> This would support my suggestion that the seal came

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marginal note says "touch' loueraign du priue seal monsieur." Cotgrave's *French English Dictionary* gives "a corbel of stonework" as one of the meanings of "chene" or "chaine." Thus this identification is certainly possible. Yet a privy seal with a chain was itself a very usual thing; e.g., see above, p. 133.

<sup>1</sup> The impression of the wax survives in *Chanc. Misc.* 2/41/6, and also *E.A.* 176/20, no. 26 (June 22, 1364).

<sup>2</sup> For descriptions see Birch, *Seals in B.M.* no. 5554, where a plaster cast is described; Sandford, *Genealogical History*, p. 125 (drawing); also *Archaeologia*, xxxi. p. 361, seal no. 4, and Moisant, plate to face p. 222, seal no. 6, and *Bull. J.R.L.* vii. *loc. cit.*

<sup>3</sup> I have also described this seal in detail in *Bull. J.R.L.* vii. *loc. cit.*, where it is called seal A. Seal A differs from seal B (in use in 1362) not only in the wording of the legend, which includes Edward III.'s title to the French throne, and in the position of the shield of arms, but also in minor respects. In seal A the ostrich plumes are labelled, and it is not quite certain that the lion above the chapeau has a label of three points. Moreover, the tail of the lion in A is long, in B is short, and ends on a level with his feet. The tracery of A is not so elaborate as the tracery of B. The description in Birch, *Seals in B.M.*, of these two seals (A is no. 5554, B is 5552) is not quite complete; both seals, for example, have a beaded border. The legend is: s' EDWARDI PRIMOGENITI REGIS ANGLIE ET FRANCIE PRINCIPIS WALLIE DUCIS CORNUBIE ET COMITIS CESTRIE.

<sup>4</sup> See above, p. 422.

<sup>5</sup> *Ex. Misc.* 5/39, a note of bequests to Canterbury Cathedral. The fragment is of a seal of c. 50 mms.; it gives a few letters of the legend including what looks like the beginning of "ET FRANCIE," and also the head of a crowned lion with a neck labelled with three points. Part of a shield of arms *couché*, England and France quarterly, lies clear of the marginal edge. It is certainly not the seal B in use in 1362. If this seal is the same as the British Museum



into use in 1369, and continued in use for the rest of the prince's life. All three seals used in England after 1357 were about the same size, so that the faint impressions on the dorse of documents do not assist in differentiating them.<sup>1</sup>

The privy seals used by the Black Prince, like other royal privy seals, always show a shield of arms as their distinctive feature, differenced by the label of three points so often borne by the king's eldest son. But the legend of his seals was not imitated from the parental model; it never contained at length the outworn description of *secretum*; S' may stand for *secretum*, but more probably for *sigillum*. Moreover, the prince's titles were set forth at length upon his privy seal long before the king adopted the practice as late as 1360.<sup>2</sup> For some years his privy seal was very slightly larger than that of the king,<sup>3</sup> though the prince's seals were less costly to make.<sup>4</sup> Perhaps the outward features of the prince's privy seal, no less than the character of the work it performed, indicate that it played a rather different part in the prince's administration from that taken by the king's privy seal in the government of the country. Certainly there was no slavish imitation of the royal practice.

The remaining known seals of the Black Prince are his great seal of Aquitaine,<sup>5</sup> and his various secret seals. The great seal was used only while Edward held the principality, and then only in Gascony.<sup>6</sup>

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cast, it proves that the lion had a labelled neck with three points, which is not clear from the cast itself.

<sup>1</sup> *E.g. Chester*, 1/1, part 2, which proves that a seal of c. 52 mms. was in use in 1373 and 1374; compare *A.C. L.* 147 (June 1375).

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 140.

<sup>3</sup> Impressions of the prince's seal in use from 1355 to 1360 vary from 50 to 52 mms. (see above, p. 424), whereas those of the king's privy seal in use from 1356 on were about 48 mms. (see above, p. 138). After 1362 the prince's privy seal in Aquitaine was at least 54 mms. in diameter.

<sup>4</sup> The seal made for the prince's use in Gascony in 1355, which was subsequently used in England, cost £4 : 17 : 1 (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 97), whereas in the next year a new king's privy seal cost £8 (see above, p. 133). The small privy seal used by the prince abroad in 1360 cost £5 : 15 : 4 (*M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 204d).

<sup>5</sup> A full description of the great seal is given in Birch, *Seals in B.M.* no. 5551. It is illustrated in Moisant, to face pp. 220 and 222, seals no. 5 and no. 7, where the reverse and obverse are printed as separate seals, also in Sandford, *Genealogical History*, p. 125.

<sup>6</sup> The great seal remained in Gascony after the prince's departure, for letters under it were issued in March, May and June 1371, and he returned in January. Moreover, letters concerning Gascony were issued from England early in 1372 under the privy seal "in the absence of our great seal" (*Gasc.* 85, m. 6 and m. 11).

It was the only double-faced seal in his possession.<sup>1</sup> It is of the normal type of a seal of majesty, and measures 88 mms. The obverse shows the prince seated under an elaborate canopy, and a labelled ostrich feather, surmounted by the letters E.P., adorns the field on either side.<sup>2</sup> The reverse shows an equestrian figure, and the arms displayed are those of England and France quarterly, with a label of three points.<sup>3</sup>

No complete impression of a secret seal or signet survives as far as I know, though the mark left by the wax is occasionally visible. One of the early secret seals measured about half an inch.<sup>4</sup> A new secret seal was made for the prince by John Hiltot, the goldsmith, before June 1363; it had the 'prince's feathers upon it, and cost only two pounds to make.<sup>5</sup> Presumably it was made in consequence of the grant of Aquitaine. Thus we know for certain that the prince had during his lifetime at least two secret seals. A signet made of an ancient *entaille* is said to have been used by him abroad in 1367.<sup>6</sup>

Other seals have been attributed to the Black Prince from time to time:<sup>7</sup> some can probably be assigned to his local chanceries of Wales and Chester;<sup>8</sup> one, and that a great seal, I cannot

<sup>1</sup> See, however, below, p. 429, n. 1.

<sup>2</sup> The legend is: s' EDWARDI: PRIMOGENITI: REGIS: ANGLIE: PRINCIPIS: AQUITANNIE ET WALLIE: DUCIS: CORNUBIE: ET: COMITIS: CESTRIE.

<sup>3</sup> The legend is the same as that of the obverse.

<sup>4</sup> Probably  $\frac{1}{16}$  in.; *A.C.* liv. 96. The document is undated, but was certainly issued between August 1345 and August 1354. Cp. *ib.* 71, 78, 98, etc. Cp. *A.C.* xl. 145, 146, etc. The method in which these letters have been mounted makes it impossible to measure the seals accurately.

<sup>5</sup> *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 261d. The auditors of the receiver-general's account are here ordered to make allowance for forty shillings paid Hiltot for a secret seal of the prince's "armes de pennes."

<sup>6</sup> B. Fillon, *Jean Chandos*, p. 18 (with illustration). "On y voit Hercule venant de percer d'une flèche un oiseau de Stymphale."

<sup>7</sup> Descriptions of the prince's seals are given in Birch, *Seals in B.M.* ii. nos. 5551-5558; Douët d'Arcq, iii. nos. 10132-10134; *Archaeologia*, xxxi. *loc cit.*; Moisant, appendix vii. (pictures and legends only: not very accurate); Sandford, *Genealogical History*, p. 125 (picture only), and *Bull. J.R.L.* vii. *loc cit.*; references have already been given in the footnotes to descriptions of such other isolated seals as have been here discussed.

<sup>8</sup> For example, *Archaeologia*, xxxi. p. 361. The second seal there described is almost certainly the Black Prince's seal of the Chester exchequer (compare *Anc. D.* AA. 444). Also Allen, *History of Lambeth*, p. 350, where the second seal depicted is also probably the Chester seal. (It is, however, drawn with a label of three points and the Chester seal may have shown five.) Seal no. 8 in *Archaeologia*, *loc. cit.*, is inadequately described and therefore difficult to identify, but it is probably the seal used abroad in 1360 (see above, p. 425).

trace.<sup>1</sup> If the evidence of surviving seals alone were to be used to determine whether the Black Prince had a great seal (apart from the seal of Aquitaine), the remote possibility would remain that this unidentified seal belonged to him, though even on such evidence I think it unlikely. In the face of all the other information about his secretarial arrangements, however, I have no hesitation in rejecting the idea that such a great seal can have belonged to him.

When the Black Prince's secretariat was faced with similar problems to those which the king's writing departments had already attempted to solve, it met them in very similar ways. The reduplications of the privy seal during absence, and the interdependence of the domestic and foreign writing organisations, are cases in point. Diplomatic usage, no less than the wider spheres of organisation and policy, reflect this conservatism of temper. In general phraseology, in methods of dating and absence of dating, in the witnesses to formal grants, in the formulas of letters patent, in the simplified brevity of bills and letters of warrant, and of instruments under secret seal and signet, in the changing seals and legends required by varying degrees of Anglo-French hostility, in the use of notes of warrants and of the

<sup>1</sup> *E.g. Archaeologia*, xxxi. p. 361, seal no. 1. Here a great seal is described which is attributed to the Black Prince. It is not his great seal of Aquitaine. Nor do I think it is likely to have belonged to him, for the royal shield of arms upon the reverse is differentiated by a label of five points, and his arms, I think, more usually had a label of three points. Yet it is possible that on his exchequer seal of Chester he used a label of five points as a difference. One cannot speak dogmatically from the surviving impressions. Edward III. as earl of Chester certainly had a Chester exchequer seal with a label of five points, and the great seal of Edward of Carnarvon as prince of Wales had a shield of arms with a five-pointed label on the reverse, though a shield of arms borne by an equestrian figure on the obverse is differenced by a label of three points (Birch, *Seals in B.M.* ii. no. 5549) and the shield of arms on his privy seal is also differenced in this way. The legend of the reverse of this seal (no. 1), attributed to the Black Prince in *Archaeologia*, xxxi. *loc. cit.*, also reads strangely: "EDWARDUS PRINCEPS WALLIE COMES CESTRIE ET CORNUBIE." On the whole I incline to the view that this is really a somewhat inaccurate description of Edward of Carnarvon's great seal (Birch, *Seals in B.M.* 5549; *Anc. D.* 453), to which it bears a general resemblance. In the absence of the seal itself, or even a very detailed description of it, this speculation is not very profitable. The same great seal, with many details omitted, is perhaps drawn in Allen's *History of Lambeth*, p. 350, but here the legend of the obverse is said to run: "EDWARDUS. PRIMOGENITUS. EDWARDI. TERTII. REGIS. ANGLIE." This, if accurate, would be conclusive, but the description is certainly unusual, and the legend of the reverse does not give confidence in the accuracy of the drawing, for it too runs strangely: "SIGILLUM. EDWARDI. FILII. RA. DEI. ILLUSTRIS. REGIS. ANGLIE."



names of individual clerks, in methods of sealing, in the size of seals and their design, and in the use of secret seal and signet—in all such ways analogies may be found either in the national chancery, in the privy seal office, or in the departments of the king's personal seals. Varieties in procedure—as in the restricted sphere of the privy seal in certain localities, in the form and scope of charters, in the greater use of seals *plaqué*, and of paper, in the normal issue of warrants for letters of presentation under secret seal or signet, and in the use of more pretentious titles in the legends of seals—these are all due to the existence of local seals with a traditional competence and utility, or to the absence of a great seal with no territorial limitation. Other differences, as, for example, the greater use by the prince of ecclesiastical methods of dating, may be traced to the demands of Gascon custom.

Striking analogies may also be found in the organisation and methods of John of Gaunt's secretariats, where diplomatic usage was similar, though not identical. The duke of Lancaster was faced by problems similar to those of his elder brother. Both possessed local seals of some degree of independent authority; both had extensive claims abroad which carried with them the use of a great seal, subject to territorial limitations; neither had such a great seal for use throughout England. Thus their privy seal departments, while modelled on that of the king, were more like each other's in scope than like their father's. The privy seals of both magnates were used for all manner of business, and had ultimate and permanent authority over an even wider range of activities than the king's privy seal.<sup>1</sup> Both magnates also issued warrants under the privy seal to their local chanceries, even as the king sent warrants to the chancery of England; both wrote either in Latin or French; both normally used the Christian year for the dating of letters for foreign consumption, and the regnal year for letters in England;<sup>2</sup> both referred indiscriminately to

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 369.

<sup>2</sup> The Christian year in both chanceries would seem to have begun on March 25, when the letter was intended for Gascony. John of Gaunt's letters to ecclesiastical persons were also sometimes dated by the Christian year according to the style of the Annunciation (*e.g. John of Gaunt's Register*, I. no. 184). When, however, he began to use the great seal of Castile, the year was reckoned as beginning at Christmas (*ib.* no. 321, 1373), though this was not regular Castilian practice till after 1384 (Giry, p. 126).

“our seal” and “our privy seal.” Both magnates, like the king, used single-faced privy seals with red wax, and issued both formal instruments, writs of warrant, letters and bills under their privy seals; both found use for a more personal seal like the signet.<sup>1</sup> Even the design of the privy seal was occasionally similar.<sup>2</sup>

Despite differences of nomenclature and differences of organisation, and the less important differences of diplomatic practice, there was no essential distinction between the methods of the king, prince and duke. The greatest apparent difference, the absence of a great seal for general English usage in the chanceries of the king's sons, did not in actual fact mean much more than an expansion of the sphere of the privy seal on one hand, a contraction on the other. Throughout, the examples set both by the king's chancery and king's privy seal office were continually borne in mind; and the separate unitary organisations of the sons garnered the accumulated experience of several generations of royal servants.

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XVIII

### SECTION II

#### LIST OF OFFICERS OF THE BLACK PRINCE'S HOUSEHOLD

The following lists are by no means complete, more especially for the last fifteen years of the Black Prince's life, when sources of information diminish. In the absence of any other such lists, however, they form a reasonable basis for further extension. The dates given are the first and last upon which I have found the officials acting; before 1362 (but infrequently afterwards) there is usually also

<sup>1</sup> For the duke of Lancaster's secretarial arrangements see *John of Gaunt's Register*, also Prof. Baldwin's article, *Bull. I.H.R. loc. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> See Armitage-Smith, *John of Gaunt*, plate to face p. 456, fig. (i.). Here a shield of arms *couché* of France and England quarterly, differenced by a label of three points, is surmounted by a helmet and chapeau, and above stands a crowned lion with a labelled neck. The design is thus very similar to that used in the Black Prince's seals from 1355 onwards.

evidence, which is not included here, that their employment was continuous.

### I. *Stewards of the Household*

William St. Omer, acting Aug. 18, 1335. *C.C.R.*, 1333-37, p. 523.

Robert Bilkemore, probably acting Dec. 1339. *E.A.* 389/6, m. 3.

acting Jan. 2, 1340. *Ib.* m. 4.

probably still acting *Ib.*  
June 1340.<sup>1</sup>

Edmund Kendal, acting Sept. 1340. *Ib.* m. 4.

still acting Jan. 1341. *Ib.* m. 3.

Edmund Wauncy, acting Mar. 1352. *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 32.

still acting Feb. 4, 1361. *Ib.* f. 206d.

Thomas Felton, acting Sept. 29, 1363. *C. Pap. Reg. Pet.* i. p. 452.

Reginald Malyns, acting April 21, 1364. *Ib.* p. 483.

John Maynard, acting Feb. 2, 1375. *C. Ch. R.*, v. p. 241.

### II. *Chamberlains*

Richard Bere, acting June 25, 1347. *C.P.R.*, 1345-48, p. 373.

acting May 4, 1349. *C. Pap. Reg. Pet.* i. p. 154.

Nigel Loring, acting Nov. 9, 1351. *M.B.E.*, *T.R.* 278, f. 20.

acting Feb. 2, 1375. *C. Ch. R.*, v. p. 241.

<sup>1</sup> He received his fee for the terms of Christmas in the thirteenth year; and of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist in the fourteenth year.



III. *Masters of the Household*

Nicholas de la Beche, probably acting Feb. *E.A.* 389/6, m. 4.  
1340.<sup>1</sup>

probably acting Dec. *Ib.* m. 3.  
1340.

Bartholomew Burgh- acting Jan. 1341. *Ib.* m. 1.  
ersh, senior,  
acting Nov. 5, 1347. *M.B.E., T.R.* 144, f.  
129.

IV. *Governor of the Prince's Business*

John Wingfield, acting Sept. 29, 1358. *M.B.E., T.R.* 278, f.  
150d.  
probably acting till  
death in 1361.<sup>2</sup>

John Delves, acting June 9, 1363.<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* f. 261d.

V. *Keepers or Treasurers of the Wardrobe*

John Brunham, senior, acting before Oct. 23, *Enr. Accts. (W. & H.),*  
1331,<sup>4</sup> 2 m. 10.

acting till April 18, *E.A.* 387/25.  
1336.

William Hoo, acting from April 18, *Ib.*  
1336

still acting Nov. 12, *Ib.* 389/6.  
1340.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> But not so described.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 387.

<sup>3</sup> Delves died in 1369.

<sup>4</sup> In an account of the treasurer of the queen's household between Jan. 24 and Oct. 23, 1331, a payment is recorded to John Burnham (viz. Brunham), treasurer of Edward, earl of Chester. Edward was not yet earl of Chester, though he was the recipient of Cheshire revenues.

<sup>5</sup> Hoo died soon after. The expenses of removing some of the duke of Cornwall's possessions from his house in London after his death are given, without a date, in a fragment of an account which seems to run from Jan. 1340 to Jan. 1341.

- Peter Gildesburgh,            accounting from Feb. 1, *E.A.* 389/13.  
1341.
- accounting till July 31, *Ib.* 390/3.  
1344,<sup>1</sup>
- John Hale,                    acting from July 31, *Ib.* 390/3.  
1344
- accounting till May 31, *MSS. Harl.* 4304.  
1345.
- William Norwell,            accounting from June *M.A.* 1214/3.<sup>2</sup>  
1, 1345.
- accounting till Jan. 31, *Ib.*  
1349.<sup>3</sup>
- Henry Blackburn,          lieutenant of Norwell.    *M.B.E., T.R.* 278, f. 44.  
accounting from Feb. 1,  
1349–Nov. 30, 1349.
- William Norwell,            still acting Dec. 15, *Indented Receipts*, Duchy  
1354.                            of Cornwall.
- late keeper, July 10, *M.B.E., T.R.* 278, f. 86.  
1355.<sup>4</sup>
- Henry Blackburn,          acting Aug. 3, 1355, *E.A.* 26/35.
- until Sept. 29, 1359.    *M.B.E., T.R.* 278, f.  
178.

<sup>1</sup> An acquittance dated Oct. 26, 1344, under the seal of Gildesburgh, keeper of the wardrobe, is mentioned in an account of the receiver of Cornwall (*M.A.* 812/2). It is probable, however, that this acquittance was sealed by him as keeper of the exchequer, or as receiver.

<sup>2</sup> An account of the chamberlain of North Wales, which contains a marginal note referring to Norwell's account between these dates.

<sup>3</sup> In 1346 and 1347 John Spennithorne and Matthew Wight were associated with the wardrobe, but see list no. vii. below.

<sup>4</sup> Probably Norwell was no longer acting in June 1355 (*M.B.E., T.R.* 278, f. 83 and 85). For Henry Aldrington, "garderobarius" in 1355 and for other wardrobers, see above, p. 347 n. 2.

Hugh Barton, appointed Sept. 29, *M.B.E., T.R.* 278, f. 178.  
1359.

still acting June 8, *Ib.* f. 260d.  
1363.<sup>1</sup>

Alan Stokes, acting 1364. Delpit, p. 176.

John Carleton, acting probably after *Ib.*  
1364.

Oliver Martin,<sup>2</sup> acting before Oct. 5, *Gasc.* 85, m. 1.  
1372.<sup>3</sup>

#### VI. *Controllers of the Household*

Ivo Glington, acting Feb. 1, 1341. *E.A.* 389/13.

acting July 1344.<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* 390/3.

Peter Daran, acting Aug. 1344. *MSS. Harl.* 4304.

probably acting, Nov. *M.B.E., T.R.* 278, f. 63.  
1349.<sup>5</sup>

William Peykirk, lieutenant of Daran, *Ib.* f. 63.  
acting Feb. 1, 1349.

acting Nov. 30, 1349. *Ib.*

<sup>1</sup> John Pembridge was committed the "charge of our wardrobe" in Aquitaine on June 8, 1363. It is probable, however, that he was associated with a great wardrobe, though he seems to have been financially dependent on the treasurer of the household (*M.B.E., T.R.* 278, f. 260d).

<sup>2</sup> There is no evidence to show whether Martin, described as keeper of the wardrobe of the prince of Aquitaine, was associated with the wardrobe of the household or the great wardrobe.

<sup>3</sup> On Nov. 4, 1372, the king confirmed a grant made to Martin, keeper of the wardrobe of the prince of Aquitaine, by the Black Prince, "in the time when he was prince of Aquitaine."

<sup>4</sup> In 1346 and later Glington was in France on the king's business, and does not seem to have been employed by the prince after this date (*Pipe*, 190, m. 40).

<sup>5</sup> Daran is described as controller of Henry Blackburn, and Blackburn was acting as Norwell's deputy until this date. Daran died in 1350 (*M.B.E., T.R.* 278, f. 82d).



Henry Blackburn, acting Sept. 1352. *M.B.E., T.R.* 279, f. 44.

Alexander Ongar, acting Sept. 1, 1355. *Ib.* 278, f. 92d.

acting Sept. 18, 1359. *Ib.* f. 176d.

John Henxteworth,<sup>1</sup> acting Sept. 1355. Henxteworth's *Day Book.*

acting June 1356. *Ib.*

### VII. *Keepers of the Great Wardrobe*

Before 1346, it seems probable that the keepers of the wardrobe were also keepers of the great wardrobe<sup>2</sup>; later, the office seems always to have been combined with that of the receiver. For a discussion of the office of the great wardrobe, see above, pp. 349-356.

William Norwell, keeper before Mar. 1347. *M.B.E., T.R.* 144, f. 49.

John Pirye, acting till Mar. 13, 1347. *Ib.*

Peter Lacy, acting from Mar. 13, 1347. *Ib.*

accounting from Feb. 8, 1348. *M.R., L.T.R.* 118.  
(see also list no. x.).

### VIII. *Keepers of the Seal*

William Munden, acting April 18, 1340. *E.A.* 389/6.  
perhaps acting Oct. 14, 1340.<sup>3</sup> *Ib.*

<sup>1</sup> Henxteworth was certainly acting as "controller of the prince" abroad during this period. I cannot explain the overlapping dates; it is possible, however, that Henxteworth acted abroad only.

<sup>2</sup> Probably John Spennithorne and Matthew Wight were associated with the great wardrobe in Dec. 1346 and Jan. 1347. See above, p. 351. Compare the position of John Pembridge in 1363 (above, p. 347).

<sup>3</sup> On this day Munden's clerk received a payment, and it therefore seems probable that Munden was still acting as head of the secretariat.

- Ivo Glington,<sup>1</sup> acting Jan. 8-25, 1341. *E.A.* 389/6.  
acting Mar. 1, 1345. *MSS. Harl.* 4304.
- Peter Gildesburgh, described as "keeper of the privy seal";  
no date.<sup>2</sup> *A.C.* liv. 27.
- John Hale,<sup>3</sup> acting July 12, 1346. *M.B.E., T.R.* 144, f. 33d.  
still acting Dec. 18, 1353. *Ib.* 279, f. 63d.
- Richard Wolveston,<sup>4</sup> acting from June 1, 1355.<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* f. 108.  
paid from June 30, 1355. *Ib.* 278, f. 90.  
still acting Oct. 8, 1360. *Ib.* 280, f. 107d.
- John Henxteworth,<sup>4</sup> acting May 1, 1361. *Ib.* 278, f. 236.  
acting 1362-63.<sup>6</sup> *M.A.* 15, m. 16d. (Duchy of Cornwall office).

#### IX. Clerks of Privy Seal<sup>7</sup>

- Richard Wolveston, clerk of William Munden, Oct. 1340. *E.A.* 389/6.  
clerk of Ivo Glington, 1343-44. *MSS. Harl.* 4304.

<sup>1</sup> Munden and Glington were both called "keepers of the seal," and on one occasion (1342 or 3) Glington is described as chancellor (*M.A.* 1241/13).

<sup>2</sup> See, however, above, p. 326.

<sup>3</sup> Called "keeper of the privy seal." On Dec. 16, 1346, Hale is described as chancellor (*Treaty Roll*, 23, m. 5), also in Aug. 1353 (*C. Pap. Reg. Pet.* i. p. 251).

<sup>4</sup> Also called "keeper of the privy seal."

<sup>5</sup> A heading in the register of the prince's letters, "De tempore Ricardi de Wolveston," is followed by a letter of June 1.

<sup>6</sup> Henxteworth is mentioned as keeper in an account running from Sept. 1362 to Sept. 1363.

<sup>7</sup> For the prince's secretaries, see above, p. 379.

Richard Wath, acting Dec. 20, 1346.<sup>1</sup> *M.B.E., T.R.* 144, f. 38.  
acting May 19, 1347. *Ib.* f. 71.

John Carleton, clerk - registrar, ap- *Ib.* 278, f. 28d.  
pointed Jan. 26,  
1352.<sup>2</sup>  
still acting July 1, 1363 *Ib.* f. 262d.

John Bacon, clerk - registrar, acting *Ib.* f. 272d.  
April 15, 1364.  
acting Nov. 4, 1364. *Ib.* f. 277d.

John Fordham, acting April 25, 1370.<sup>3</sup> *Chanc. Misc.* 34/1/2.

#### X. *Receivers-General*

Peter Gildesburgh, acting from Aug. 1, *MS. Harl.* 4304.  
1344.<sup>4</sup>  
discharged from his *M.B.E., T.R.* 144, f. 17d.  
office, April 16, 1346.

William Norwell, acting April 16, 1346. *Ib.*  
acting June 2, 1346. *Ib.*

John Pirye, acting July 16, 1346. *Ib.* f. 1.  
acting Dec. 19, 1346. *Ib.* f. 58.

Peter Lacy, appointed Nov. 12, *Ib.* f. 27d.  
1346.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Acting in England.

<sup>2</sup> Also to write for the privy seal.

<sup>3</sup> Fordham's name is written on the bottom right hand corner of a privy seal writ of this date; presumably he was the clerk of privy seal who wrote it.

<sup>4</sup> Gildesburgh was also at the same time keeper of the prince's exchequer at Westminster, and was called by this title as late as Nov. 12, 1347 (*M.B.E., T.R.* 144, f. 131d). He was the only holder of this office.

<sup>5</sup> Also on Dec. 20, 1346 (*M.B.E., T.R.* 144, f. 33).



Peter Lacy                      still acting, Mar. 30, *M.A.* 772/6.  
*continued.*                      1371.<sup>1</sup>

Alan Stokes,                      acting Jan. 21, 1372.      *Ib.* 772/6.  
   acting Feb. 2, 1376.      *Ib.* 812/14.

#### XI. *Receivers of the Chamber*

Henry Blackburn,              acting Mar. 12, 1351.      *M.B.E., T.R.* 278, f. 4d.  
   acting Oct. 29, 1353.      *Ib.* f. 96.  
   late receiver Sept. 6,      *Ib.* f. 92.  
   1355.

William Peykirk,              acting Jan. 7, 1357.<sup>2</sup>      *C. Pap. Reg. Pet.* i. p.  
   292.

John Henxteworth,              acting May 24, 1360.      *M.B.E., T.R.* 279, f. 208  
   late receiver Oct. 24,      *Ib.* 278, f. 249d.  
   1362.

#### XII. *Steward of the Lands of the Chamber*

John Alveton,                      acting May 16, 1355.      *M.B.E., T.R.* 278, f. 79d.  
   acting Oct. 1, 1356.      *Ib.* f. 109d.

#### XIII. *Stewards of Lands*

James Woodstock,              acting winter, 1337-38.      *E.A.* 388/12.

Richard Stafford,              appointed Feb. 26,      *M.B.E., T.R.* 144, f. 39.  
   1347.

<sup>1</sup> For the whole of this time he was probably also keeper of the prince's great wardrobe. William Medici, described as "receiver of the prince of Aquitaine and Wales," in 1366, was probably a local Gascon official (Delpit, p. 190).

<sup>2</sup> Described as treasurer of the chamber.

Richard Stafford <i>continued.</i>	acting April 5, 1347. <sup>1</sup>  possibly still steward, summer 1360.	<i>M.B.E., T.R.</i> 144 f. 57.  <i>Anon. Chron.</i> p. 49.
John Wingfield,	acting 1350–51. <sup>2</sup>  acting Sept. 1353.	Brown, p. 162.  <i>C. Pap. Reg. Pet.</i> i. p. 251.
Several stewards,	acting in county groups Oct. 1361. <sup>3</sup>	<i>M.B.E., T.R.</i> 278, f. 219d.
John Delves,	acting in England some time during the prince's absence in Aquitaine.	<i>C.P.R., 1377–81</i> , p. 249.
Hugh Segrave,	acting Oct. 8, 1372.  acting June 7, 1376.	<i>Ib.</i> p. 34.  Nichols, <i>Royal Wills</i> , p. 76.

<sup>1</sup> Peter Gildesburgh is called governor of the prince's lands, May 4, 1349 (*C. Pap. Reg. Pet.* i. p. 178), and keeper of his lands on Oct. 9, 1349 (*ib.*). Hugh Berwick is described as late steward on July 9, 1355 (*M.B.E., T.R.* 278, f. 86).

<sup>2</sup> See also governor of the prince's business. For a discussion of Wingfield's position see above, p. 387. He is called steward in an account running from Mich. 1350–Mich. 1351.

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 391.

## APPENDIX





## PLATES OF SMALL SEALS

THE seals used for plates I.-VI. are preserved in the Public Record Office, those used for plates VII.-VIII. are preserved in the British Museum. They are reproduced by courtesy of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records and of the Director of the British Museum. The plates of the Record Office seals are made from photographs of casts from those seals ; the British Museum seals themselves were photographed. The keys indicate the kind of seal ; the classification, type, language, place and date, of the document to which the seal is attached ; the method of application of the seal ; the number of the mould from which the cast was made ; the pages in this volume on which the seal is described.









1



2



3



4



5



6

## KEY TO PLATE I

1. Privy Seal of Edward I. Ancient Deeds, DS. 137; letters patent, in French, dated Carlisle, 7 May, 35 Edward I. (1307), seal applied *en simple queue*: P.R.O. mould 580. Above, p. 134.

2. Privy Seal of Edward of Carnarvon, prince of Wales, afterwards Edward II. Exchequer Accounts, E101/370/10, 3rd document on the file; writ, in Latin, dated Wetheral, 21 March, 35 Edward I. (1307), seal applied to the dorse: P.R.O. mould 4707. Above, p. 135.

3. First Privy Seal of Edward II. Ancient Deeds, WS. 643; letters patent, in French, dated Berwick, 9 February, 4 Edward II. (1311), seal applied *en simple queue*: P.R.O. mould 4705. Above, p. 135.

4. Second Privy Seal of Edward II. Exchequer Accounts, E101/68/2/40; indenture, in French, dated Berwick, 22 November, 10 Edward II. (1316), seal applied *en simple queue*: P.R.O. mould 585. Above, pp. 135-6.

5. First Privy Seal of Edward III. Ancient Deeds, WS. 221; writ, in French, dated Clipston, 19 April, 9 Edward III. (1335): seal applied to the dorse: P.R.O. mould 1091 (1). Above, pp. 136-7.

6. Second Privy Seal of Edward III. Ancient Deeds, WS. 182; letters patent, in Latin, dated Antwerp, 16 May, 13 Edward III. (1339), seal applied *en simple queue*: P.R.O. mould 583 (1). Above, p. 137.



## KEY TO PLATE II

1. Third Privy Seal of Edward III., from first matrix. Ancient Deeds, LS. 303 ; indenture, in French, dated Ghent, 14 February 1339 (*i.e.* 1340 new style), seal applied *en double queue* : P.R.O. mould 436 (3). Above, p. 138.

2. Third Privy Seal of Edward III., from second matrix. Ancient Deeds, WS. 639 ; letters patent, in Latin, date Calais, 14 December, 20 Edward III. (1346), seal applied *en simple queue* : P.R.O. mould 604 (1). Above, p. 138.

3. Fourth and Sixth Privy Seal of Edward III. Ancient Deeds, A. 15105 (P.R.O. Museum, case H. 78) ; letters patent, in French, dated Westminster, 22 February, 44 Edward III. (1370), seal applied *en simple queue* : P.R.O. mould 2943. Above, pp. 138-9.

4. Fifth Privy Seal of Edward III. Ancient Deeds, WS. 277 ; letters patent, in French, dated 10 July, 36 Edward III. (1362), seal applied *en simple queue* : P.R.O. mould 593. Above, p. 140.











2



3



1

### KEY TO PLATE III

1. Privy Seal of Richard II. Ancient Deeds, WS. 630 (P.R.O. Museum, case H. 79) ; bill, in French, dated Westminster, 10 March, 1 Richard II. (1378), seal applied *en placard* : P.R.O. mould 589. Above, p. 142.

2. Privy Seal of Eleanor of Castile, first queen of Edward I. Ancient Deeds, LS. 185 ; indenture, in Latin, dated Leeds, 7 May, 14 Edward I. (1286), seal applied *en double queue* : P.R.O. mould 4639. Above, p. 287.

3. Privy Seal of Isabella of France, queen of Edward II. Ancient Deeds, DS. 19 ; letters patent, in French, dated Rising, 28 September, 7 Edward III. (1333), seal applied *en simple queue* : P.R.O. mould 4640. Above, p. 288.



## KEY TO PLATE IV

1. Secret Seal of Edward III.: the Chivalrot. Ancient Deeds, WS. 638 ; letters patent, in French, dated Westminster, 5 September, 31 Edward III. (1357), seal applied *en placard* : P.R.O. mould 4708. Above, pp. 175-6.

2. Secret Seal of Edward III. : the Griffin. Ancient Deeds, RS. 417 (P.R.O. Museum, case H. 77) ; letters patent, in French, dated Tower of London, 7 August, 15 Edward III. (1341), seal applied *en simple queue* : P.R.O. mould 3599. Above, pp. 181-2.

3. Signet of Richard II. Common Pleas Writs and Returns (Selected), or C.P., 51/1/2 ; informal letter, in French, dated Sheen, 7 November (year omitted), seal applied to the dorse : P.R.O. mould 4701 (1). Above, pp. 202-3.

4. Signet of Richard II. C.P. 51/1/4 ; informal letter, in French, dated Palace of Westminster, 12 November (year omitted), seal applied to the dorse : P.R.O. mould 4701 (2). Above, pp. 202-3.

5. Signet of Richard II. Chancery Warrants 1/1343/18 (P.R.O. Museum, case H. 80) ; writ, in French, dated Eltham, 15 October (1384), seal applied to the dorse : P.R.O. mould 4706. Above, p. 203.

6. Signet of Richard II. Diplomatic Documents, Exchequer, 326 ; "instruction" given by the king to his chamberlain (William Lescrope) going to France, in French, dated manor of Havering, 15 June, 19 Richard II. (1396), seal applied *en double queue* : P.R.O. mould 2946. Above, p. 204.



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## KEY TO PLATE V

1. Chester Exchequer Seal of Black Prince as earl of Chester. Obverse of double-faced seal attached to Ancient Deeds, B. 10546; inspeximus and confirmation of a charter of Edward II. (?), in Latin, dated Chester, 10 September, 27 Edward III. (1353), seal applied pendant from plaited *lacs de soie*: P.R.O. mould 3262A. Above, p. 417.

2. A Privy Seal of Black Prince. Reverse of double-faced seal attached to Ancient Deeds, B. 10546 (see 1. above); P.R.O. mould 3262B



## KEY TO PLATE VI

1. Another Privy Seal of Black Prince. Ancient Deeds. B. 9036 ; letters patent, in Latin, dated Northbourne by Sandwich, 24 October, 33 Edward III. (1359), seal applied pendant from plaited *lacs de soie* : P.R.O. mould 4277. Above, p. 424.

2. A Privy Seal of Black Prince in use after 1360. Diplomatic Documents, Exchequer, 1106 ; letters patent, in French, dated Palace of Westminster, 19 July 1362, seal applied pendant from plaited *lacs de soie* : P.R.O. mould 4702. Above, p. 425.











#### KEY TO PLATE VII

Privy Seal of Black Prince used abroad in 1360. British Museum, Additional Charters, 11308; letters patent, in French, dated Boulogne, 26 October 1360, seal applied *en simple queue*. Above, p. 425.



## KEY TO PLATE VIII

1. Privy Seal of Margaret of France, second queen of Edward I. British Museum, Additional Charters, 18199; letters patent, in Latin, dated Woodstock, 30 September, 29 Edward I. (1301), seal applied *en simple queue*. Above, p. 288.

2. Privy Seal of Philippa of Hainault, queen of Edward III. British Museum, Harleian Charters, 43.E.11; letters patent, in French, dated Rotherhithe, 27 (?) June, ? 39 Edward III. (1365?), seal applied *en simple queue*. Above, p. 289.

3. Privy Seal of Anne of Bohemia, first queen of Richard II. British Museum, Additional Charters, 20396; letters patent, in French, dated Westminster, 20 November, 14 Richard II. (1390), seal applied *en simple queue*. Above, p. 289.

END OF VOL. V

























